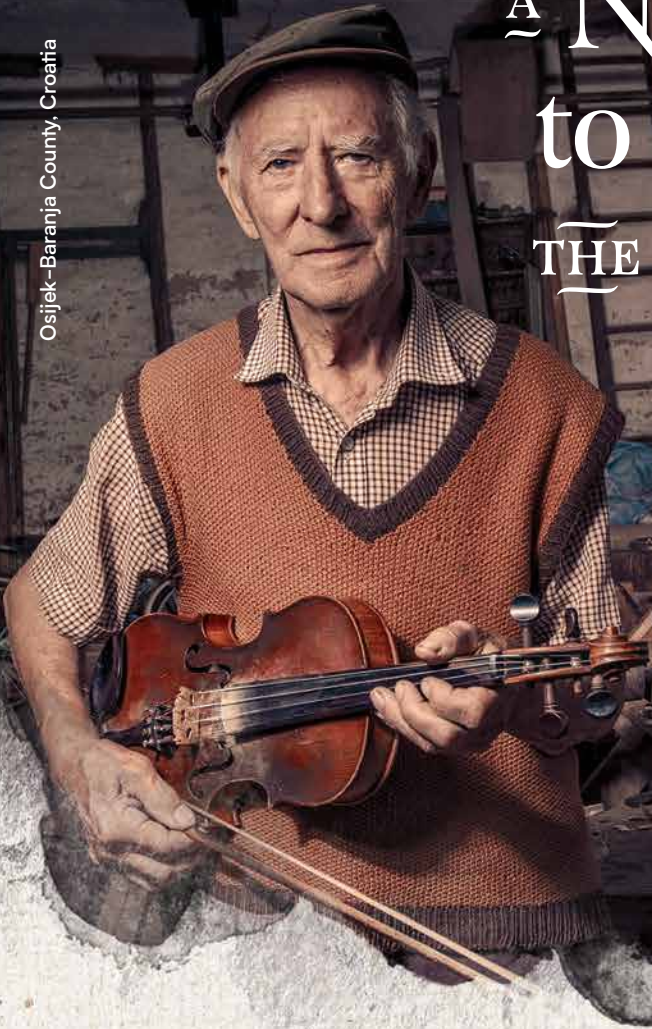


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LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

Dear Readers,

Statista reports by 2019 there will be about 2.77 billion social media users around the globe, up from 2.46 billion in 2017. In 2017, 71% of internet users were social network users and these figures are expected to grow.

In TMR's Outlook on Social Media, we take a deep dive into what agents are doing individually and at the agency level, which social media platforms are providing the most impact, what's working, what's not, as well as how much business they are generating from their social media efforts.

Social media is turning out to be the great equalizer if not an advantage for today's travel advisors, agency owners, and managers. Social platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Twitter and more are giving savvy travel advisors and travel agency owners and managers an edge over online travel agencies and suppliers who are able to spend billions of dollars in paid advertising, public relations and hiring influencers and expensive consultants.

By keeping in touch with existing clients, cultivating new ones, positioning themselves as experts and building their brands at little or no expense beyond the time it takes to execute their posts, travel advisors are rapidly shaping travel decisions and the tourism industry at large.

I believe this landmark study will be a must-read for you and your team and will provide important insight into what your colleagues are doing and best practices, while offering a plethora of ideas and suggestions on how you can use social media to increase your revenues and profits. We've highlighted the steps to take to get you where you want to be and even provided a glossary of social media terms, in addition to providing feedback from industry experts on what to focus on and where to begin.

We would like to thank our sponsors — Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises, Silversea Cruises and Azamara Club Cruises — who join us in our effort to arm you with the most relevant and impactful data on social media and how it has the power to change your business landscape.

Thanks for reading, and please make sure you read Travel Market Report every day for news and information to help build your business!

Sincerely,



Anne Marie Moebes
EVP and Publisher



2018 KEY FINDINGS

FOR BUSINESS, ADVISORS AND AGENCIES ARE MOST LIKELY TO FOLLOW SUPPLIERS (81%), followed by clients (70%), and trade media (51%).

While 35% of agents said they don't or can't track sales from social media, those that do say there is a big payoff with **11% REPORTING THEY GENERATED OVER \$100,000 IN BUSINESS DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS** and 29% saying they realized sales of at least \$25,000.

THE TOP REASON AGENTS ARE USING SOCIAL MEDIA (87%) IS TO GET NEW CUSTOMERS while 77% say they use the platforms to position themselves as experts and 74% say it's a tool to market to existing customers.

Agents are still feeling their way – 62% said they don't know what SEO is or weren't sure, and most don't use analytics, although they are diving in – **OVER TWO-THIRDS USE VIDEO IN THEIR SOCIAL MEDIA AND 80% HAVE BUSINESS PROFILES ON FACEBOOK.**

Still, agents have a feel for what type of content is most effective, **WITH PICTURES FROM THEIR OWN TRAVELS, BEAUTIFUL TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY AND SPECIAL OFFERS RANKING HIGHEST.**

NEARLY 90% SAY SOCIAL MEDIA IS VERY/SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT TO THEIR MARKETING PLANS, with about half saying it is very important. Over 40% have a formal plan for social media marketing.

85% OF RESPONDENTS (owner/managers and advisors) SAID EITHER THEY OR THEIR AGENCIES USE SOCIAL MEDIA FOR BUSINESS PURPOSES.

IN TERMS OF USAGE, FACEBOOK IS UBIQUITOUS WITH 97% OF RESPONDENTS PARTAKING, WITH INSTAGRAM (60%) AND LINKEDIN (59%), PERHAPS SURPRISINGLY, ROUNDING OUT THE TOP THREE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS. These three were also rated as being the most important for their business.

ONLY HALF OF RESPONDENTS RUN PAID ADS, WITH FACEBOOK BEING THE TOP CHOICE by a five-to-one margin over second place Instagram (50% to 10%).

FACEBOOK IS THE PLACE AGENTS POST MOST FREQUENTLY, with 42% updating content at least 10 times per month compared to 18% for Instagram, 10% for Twitter and dropping off from there. At the same time 24% of agents post at least one video to YouTube each month.

EIGHT IN 10 AGENTS SAY THEY GET AT LEAST ONE BOOKING PER MONTH FROM FACEBOOK compared to just a third (33%) from Instagram, 20% from LinkedIn, 16% from Twitter and 13% from YouTube.

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INTRODUCTION



When Steve Jobs created the smartphone, he built a platform for travel advisors that cut the cord that for more than 30 years tethered them to those CRTs with blinking green screens. At the same time search engines such as Google were bringing a world of information to the fingertips of consumers in mere seconds – too much information to be useful. Search for “travel” on Google and you will get 4.9 billion results. Even a more targeted search for “Los Cabos luxury hotels” brings back 6.3 million results while “Best Caribbean cruises” brings back 181 million options!

Mark Zuckerberg via Facebook launched a new media platform where you didn't need to have a big ad budget or expensive PR firm to get your name out there, while YouTube enabled everyone to become the star of their own videos, and Instagram provided a free platform to post beautiful travel photography only previously seen in glossy magazines.

With nearly 2.5 billion social media users online, travel agency owners and individual advisors

have recognized the opportunities to cost-effectively use these platforms to compete for customers beyond their localities, while building their brands, positioning themselves as experts and enhancing relationships and business with current patrons.

In this landmark survey, close to 1,000 readers of Travel Market Report responded to an online questionnaire via SurveyMonkey.



Who answered our survey?

Travel Market Report surveyed travel agents who read its daily newsletter via email at the end of September 2018. A total of 945 agents responded to the survey providing a +/- confidence rate of three points. As a screening question, agents were asked, "Do you or does your agency use social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, etc.) for business?" The 15% of agents who answered negatively were excluded from further questions, providing a total of 801 participating agents.

Of the agents who participated, 52% identified themselves as travel agent/advisors only, 36% said their roles included both owner/manager and advisor, while 12% said their responsibilities were limited to ownership or management. From there, 63% of the respondents said they were answering the questions from the perspective of their business social media in their roles as advisors while 37% said they were answering from their perspective of agency practices in their roles as owners or managers of the agency. We highlight results where the owner/manager agency perspective was different from that of advisors and how they use social media for their individual business needs.



The respondent profile, namely TMR readers, averages 12.8 years in the travel industry, \$1.3 million in annual personal leisure travel sales, with 92% saying they sell with a focus on tours and vacation packages, 84% selling cruises, as well as a strong focus on FIT vacations (63%), family travel (54%), group (53%), luxury (51%), weddings and honeymoons (39%) and adventure travel (30%). An incentive of two \$250 gift cards was offered for participation.

TMR SOCIAL MEDIA SURVEY RESPONDENTS AVERAGE:





Do you or does your agency have a formal social media marketing plan?

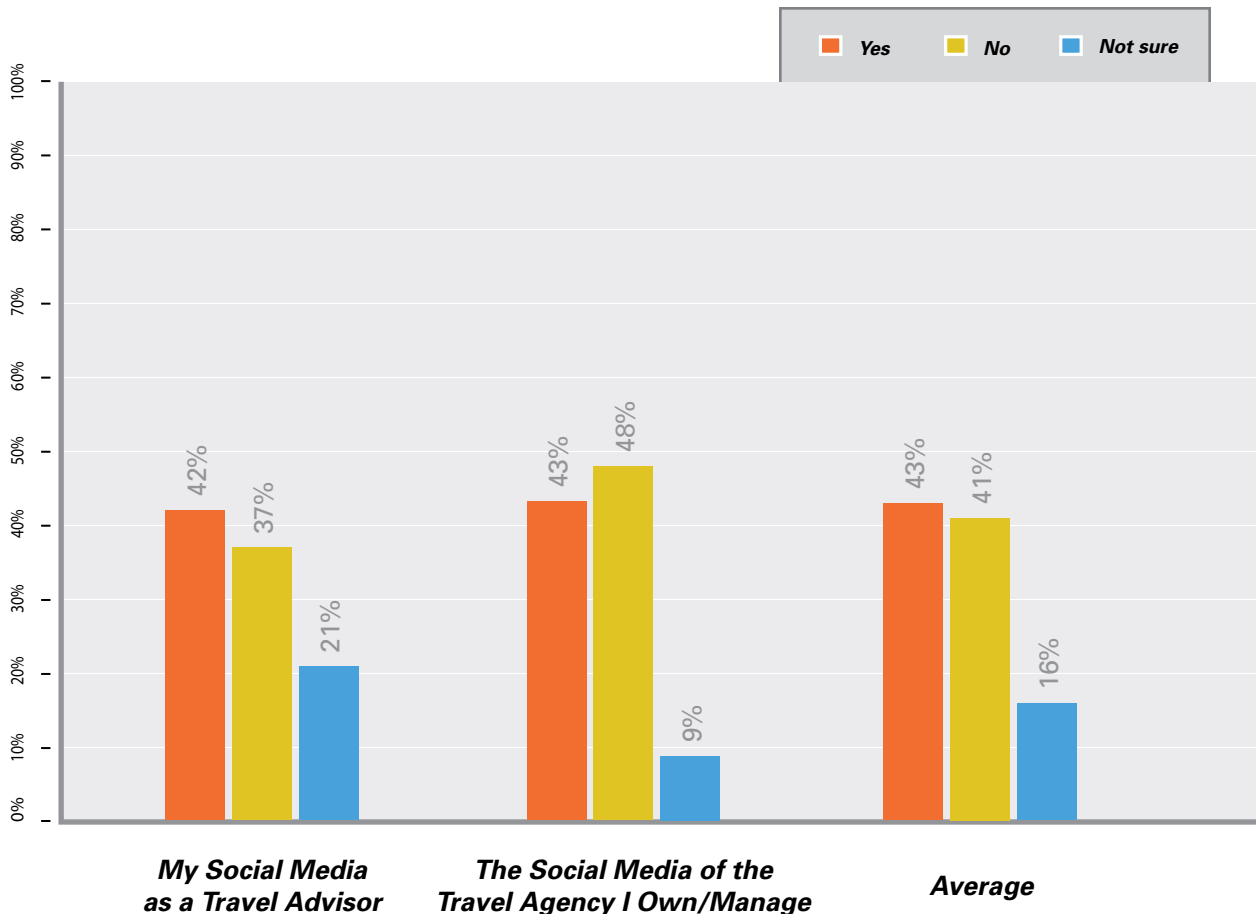
More than four in 10 agencies (43%) and advisors (42%) told us they had formal social media programs, although advisors were more than twice as likely to be unsure (21% vs. 9%). Overall 43% of respondents told us they or their agencies have a formal social media plan versus 41% who don't and 16% who weren't sure.

Many of those agents who said they didn't have a plan said they are "just starting" or "currently developing" plans, including working with third parties for help or posting with an informal plan using their intuition. One advisor told us, "As the agent I am 'free style' no plan (and) just post when I feel passionate about the experience or see something worth posting. I can't make my travel all about social media as this takes away from my moment and my personal experience but I try to post highlights on Facebook and or Instagram. The travel agency itself has a Facebook page and an Instagram account. I post as myself, a lover of travel. I want clients to seek me from the joy they see in my photos, not because I am marketing myself for business. That's just me personally speaking."



Of those agents who said they had generated \$25,000 or more in sales from their social media efforts, 59% said they had a social media marketing plan, a significant difference from the overall results and outside the margin of error.

Do you or does your agency have a formal social media marketing plan?





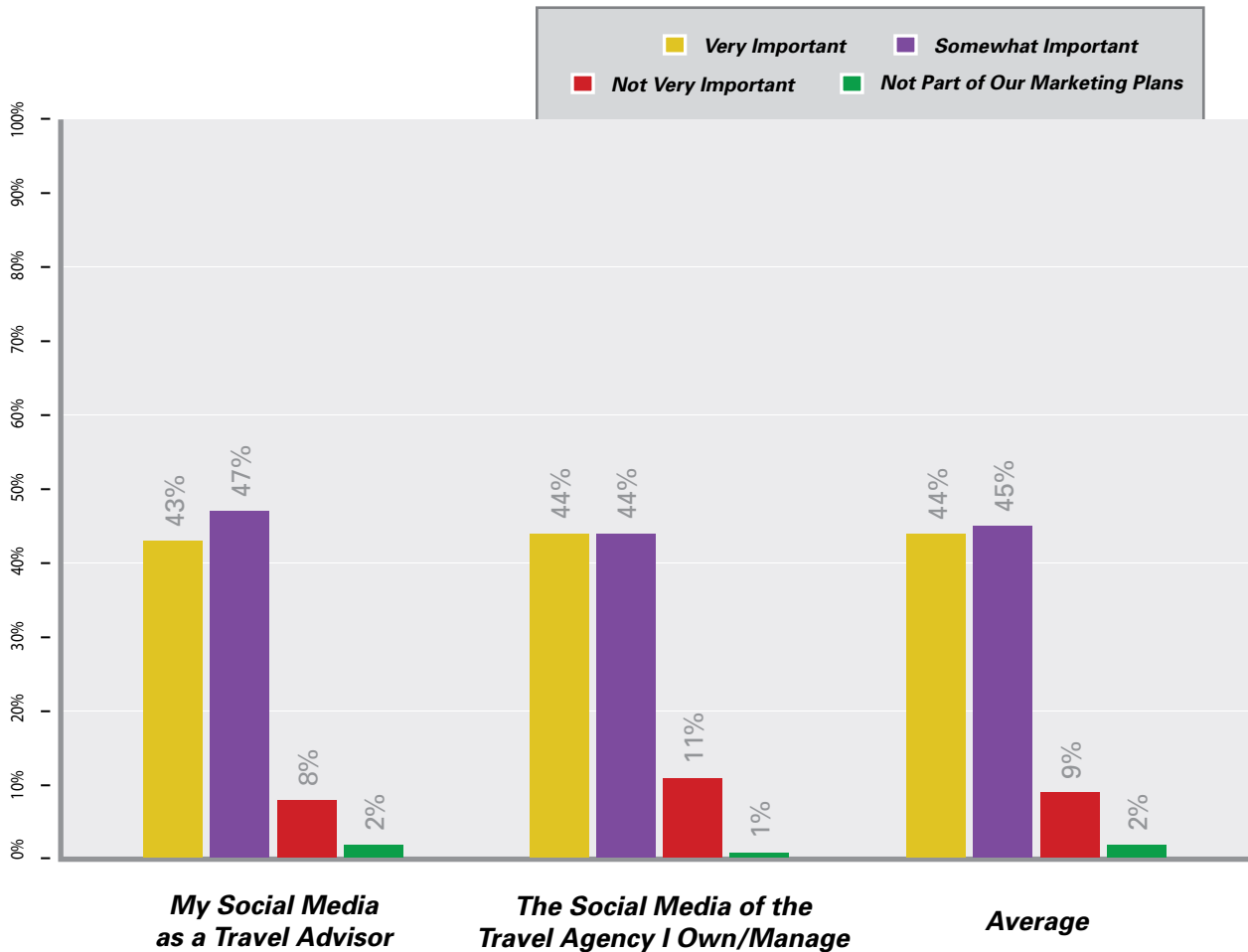
How important is social media to you/your agency's overall marketing plans?

Nearly 90% of respondents said social media is very or somewhat important to their personal or agency marketing plans with only 9% saying social media isn't very important and only 1-2% saying that social media is not part of their marketing plans. Owner/managers were more likely to see social media as "not very important" compared to just 8% of advisors.

One reason for the difference could be some agents believe social media is more important for individual advisors than the agency overall. One agent said,

"Referrals mostly satisfy as a lead source; social media is used to add professionalism to our agency." Another told us, "This is a social media age and we need to be able to reach potential clients in that manner," while a third said, "It absolutely drives my business." One agent expressed concern about finding the right balance, saying, "Yes, today social media plays an important role in overall marketing plans. But it should be used within the limits. Excess use of social media can have adverse effects."

How important is social media to you/your agency's overall marketing plans?



Results may not add up to 100% due to roundup.



A Travel Advisor's GUIDE TO SOCIAL MEDIA SUCCESS

by Kerry Tice

Here's how to develop a personal connection with your clients through social media that keeps them looking for your latest travel posts and ideas for their next journey.

The results are in and they tell us a large majority of travel advisors are winning at the game of social media. Nearly 90 percent of those surveyed by Travel Market Report say social media is very or somewhat important to their marketing plans, with over 40 percent reporting they have a formal plan currently in place.

Money is being made, and best of all, lasting personal connections have been formed and are being fostered through multiple social media channels, leading to future sales.

Fundamentally, this engagement is providing the agency community with

a viable path to clients that will remain integral to their overall business plan for years to come – or at least until the next best thing comes along.

So, where do you stand in the social media space? Are you inspiring your clients through social media? Have you developed an online personal connection with them that keeps them looking for your latest travel posts and ideas for their next journey?

And, if you aren't where you need to be, how do you get there?

Travel Market Report spoke with a number of retail travel agents who have

met the social media challenge head on, and thrived. In fact, 11 percent of survey respondents reported generating over \$100,000 in business during the past 12 months thanks to their social media efforts and 29 percent said they realized sales of at least \$25,000. Clearly, these agents know how to tip the scales in their favor.

Following is a success story of one standout social media travel advisor who is worth learning from, that is, if you are looking to up your game ... and we hope you are.

Theresa Chu-Bermudez, owner and travel designer at Get Out! Customs Travel,



LLC, launched her company a mere three years ago in the spring of 2016, but didn't actually work full-time until the following January 2017. From 2017 through 2018, she has more than doubled her sales and tripled her commissions (booking close to \$400,000 in travel within just the past twelve months). When asked what she attributes her growth to, she undoubtedly replied, "branding and social media presence," with a particular focus on the complementary attributes of Facebook and Instagram, including referrals gained from Facebook posts and social media shout-outs.

Chu-Bermudez employs a formal social media marketing plan because she said it helps her stay organized and think about her goals for each post. For example, she asks herself: Is this post to generate a sale? Acquire more followers? Create more exposure for the business? Prior to having a formal plan, she said she was "posting by the seat of my pants," which became stressful and unproductive once

her volume started to increase.

The main components of her plan include a combination of Facebook Lives, Instagram stories and posts, and hashtag holidays (i.e. National Hat Day, National Pizza Day, etc.).

"An important part of my social media marketing plan is specifying my target audience so I can gear my content towards them. There are times when I'll post more often because I'm at a conference, on a fam, or simply traveling in general."

She is also part of a few professional groups, one of which focuses on the wedding industry in Central Florida and the other on women business owners in Tampa Bay, whereby she and her business have been featured in partnership with their social media efforts.

"If possible, I may interview a few professionals on Facebook Live who aren't in the industry to talk about something that travelers may be interested in. For example, I interviewed a professional photographer about how to take the best photos while traveling. This was mutually beneficial since both of us received great exposure."

WHAT WORKS BEST

Visuals (photos and videos), along with valuable content and storytelling, have proven to be Chu-Bermudez's most effective means of engaging with clients and prospects. "Through my posts, I demonstrate my expertise by providing useful tips, as well as letting people know that I have experience at what I'm selling and that I am well-connected to numerous travel suppliers."

Keeping her posts updated regularly helps, too. "Being consistent in my posts allows me to be found on social media more easily. Plus, I always make sure that my voice shines through in my content, which is why I try not to use generic social media posts."

Chu-Bermudez makes a point to engage with each and every person who posts a comment or reacts to her post. "The way they engage on my posts gives me an idea of the kind of experiences they are drawn to. For example, if I post a picture of a river cruise experience and someone comments, 'This is something

that I've been thinking about doing!', then I will reply to that comment as well as direct message them [see Travel Market Report's social media terms glossary for more information on DM]. Then, whenever a promotion happens on something I know those clients would love, or whenever I learn about an experience I know they'd consider, I reach out to them with the details."

The number of bookings Chu-Bermudez's retains from social media differs depending on the season, although she tends to average five large bookings per month from both Facebook and Instagram. She cautions fellow advisors, however, to be patient, noting that it takes some time for social media posts to have an effect, so it's important to remain consistent and don't give up.

"I have had clients reach out to me for a booking inquiry who said that they have been following me for a while and were finally ready to start planning their trip. I also had a client who had only booked domestic travel with me reach out for her first international trip. She said, 'After following you on Instagram and seeing all the international trips you've planned, I'm so excited to be able to plan an international trip with you!'"

In summary, Chu-Bermudez shares her best advice for succeeding with social media marketing:

- 1 Know your audience and post with a purpose.
- 2 Don't get caught up on acquiring a large number of followers on Facebook or Instagram. The goal is to generate sales. If you have thousands of followers, but aren't converting them to clients or inspiring existing clients to book again, then the fact that you have a large number of followers isn't a good metric to measure your success.
- 3 Be proactive in learning how to best utilize social media in a way that works for you. The social media landscape is constantly changing, so make sure to attend webinars, do your own research, and participate in learning opportunities to increase your knowledge.



Compare Your Social Media Savvy

Search engine optimization (SEO)

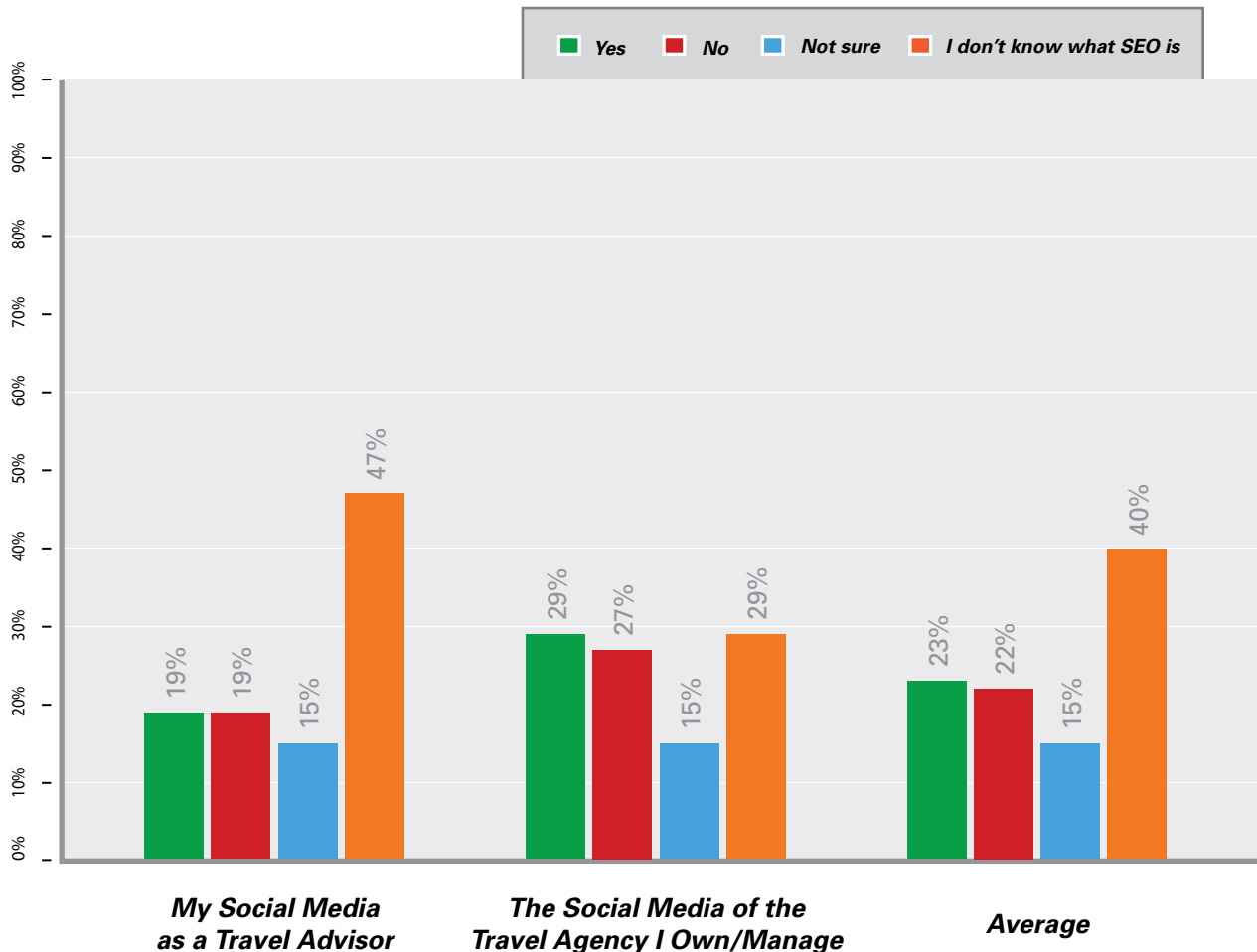
is the practice of increasing the quantity and quality of traffic to your website through organic (editorial – non paid) search engine results. – Moz

Four in 10 respondents didn't know what SEO – search engine optimization – is – and only 23% use it. Of the total sample, less than one in five advisors (19%) incorporate SEO into their social media strategy and 62% told us they either didn't know what SEO is or weren't sure.



It's also worth noting (not shown in the chart) that 37% of agents (both for agencies and advisors) who said they had sold at least \$25,000 via social media in the past year incorporate SEO, showing a correlation between expertise and just doing it.

Do you incorporate SEO into your social media strategy?





Compare Your Social Media Savvy

Hashtag

is a unique strategy for categorizing messages ... and is seen as a very powerful marketing tool by businesses. The # symbol precedes the tag followed by one or more keywords that will properly lead individuals to conversations and discussions pertaining to a specific topic or theme.”

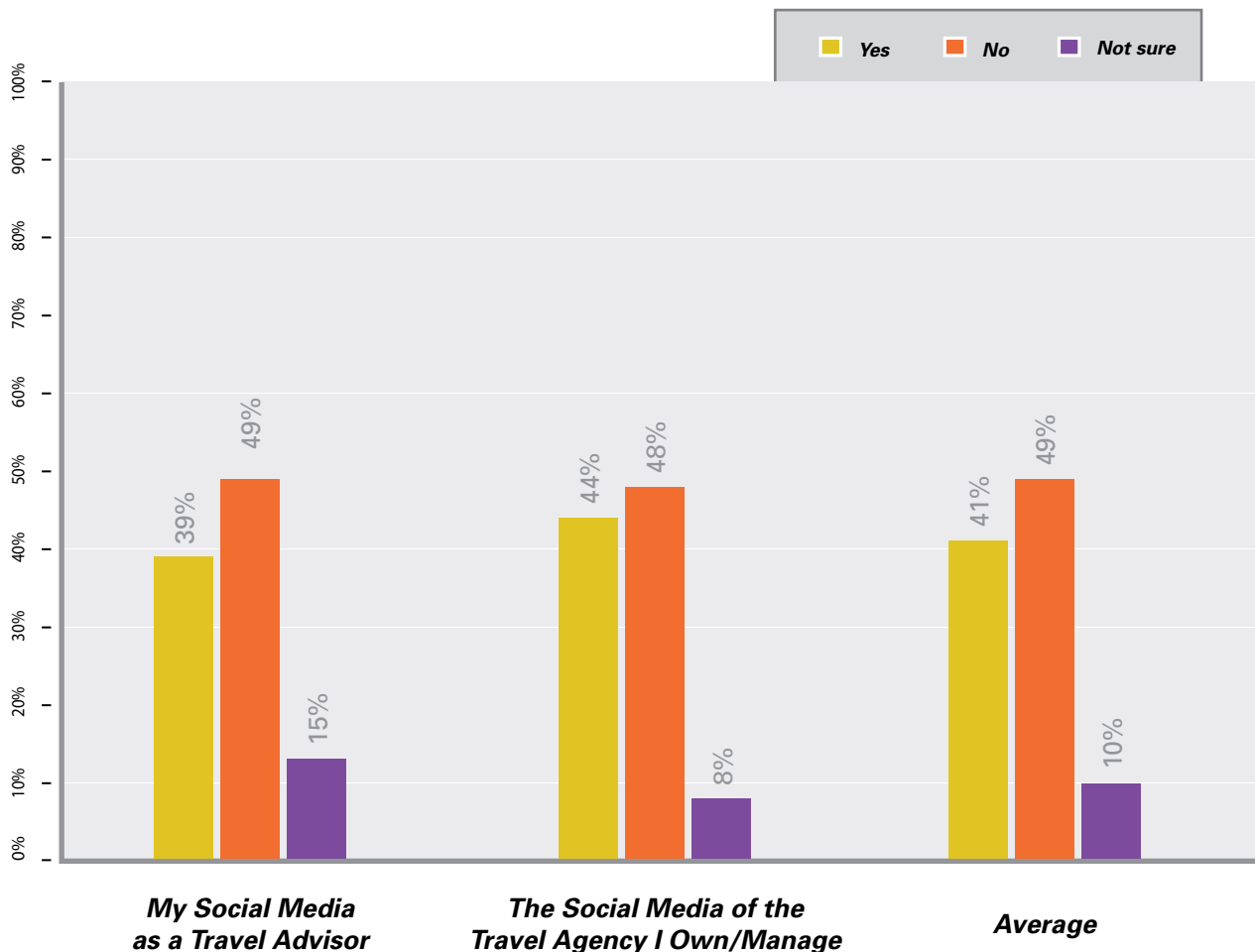
– Hashtags.org

Nearly 60% of respondents don't use or track hash tags, or weren't sure, with agency websites using the indexing tool slightly more (44%) than individual advisors (39%).



Conversely, 55% of respondents who said they had sold at least \$25,000 via their social media efforts do use hash tags.

Do you use and/or track hashtags?





Compare Your Social Media Savvy

More than two-thirds of agents (68%) who responded said they use video in their social media with individual advisors and agencies showing a similar usage of this high-power tool.

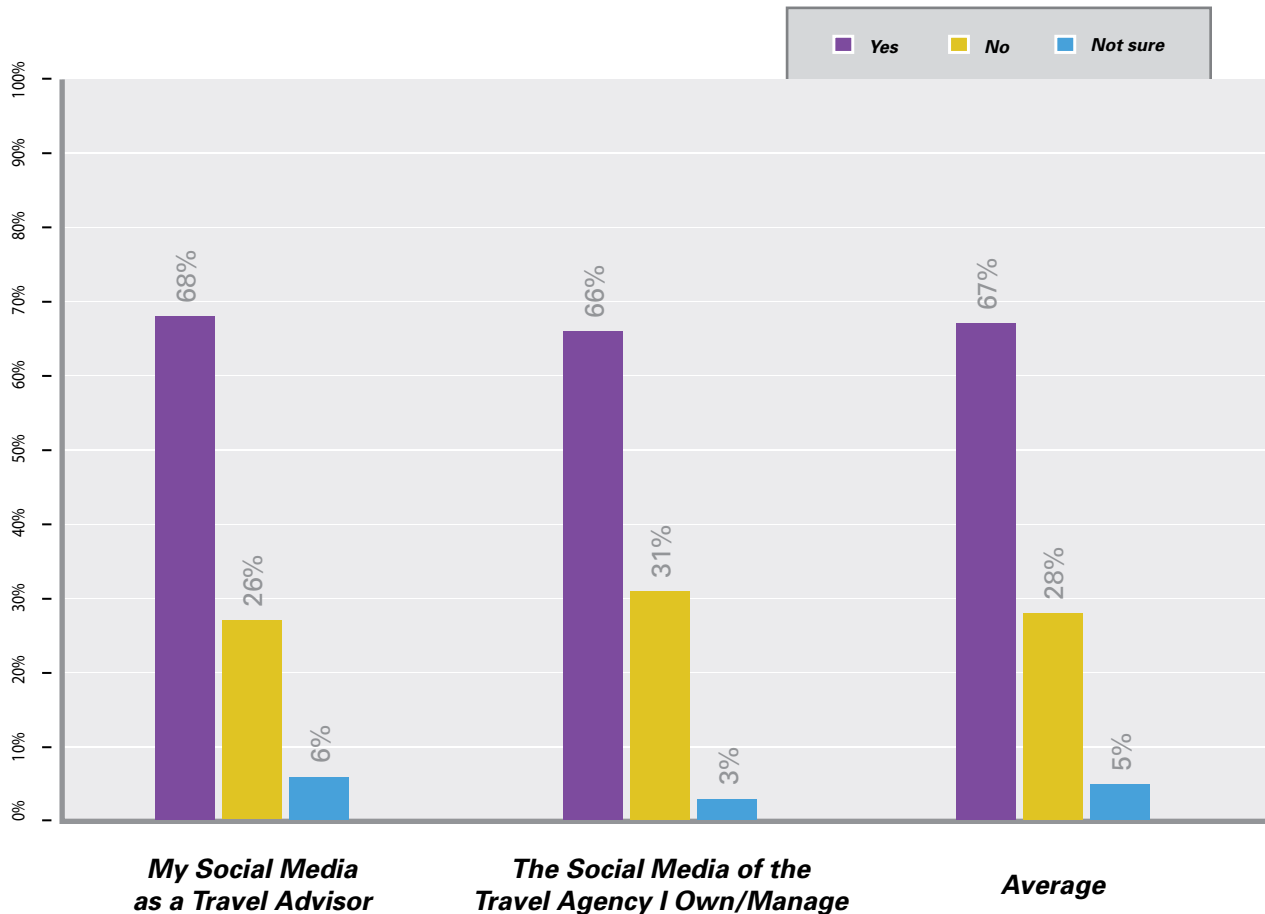


Some 79% of those respondents who said they had sold at least \$25,000 via social media in the past year said they use video, a significantly higher number than overall totals.

"Video on landing pages can increase conversions by up to 80%." — Social Media Today



Do you use video in your social marketing efforts?





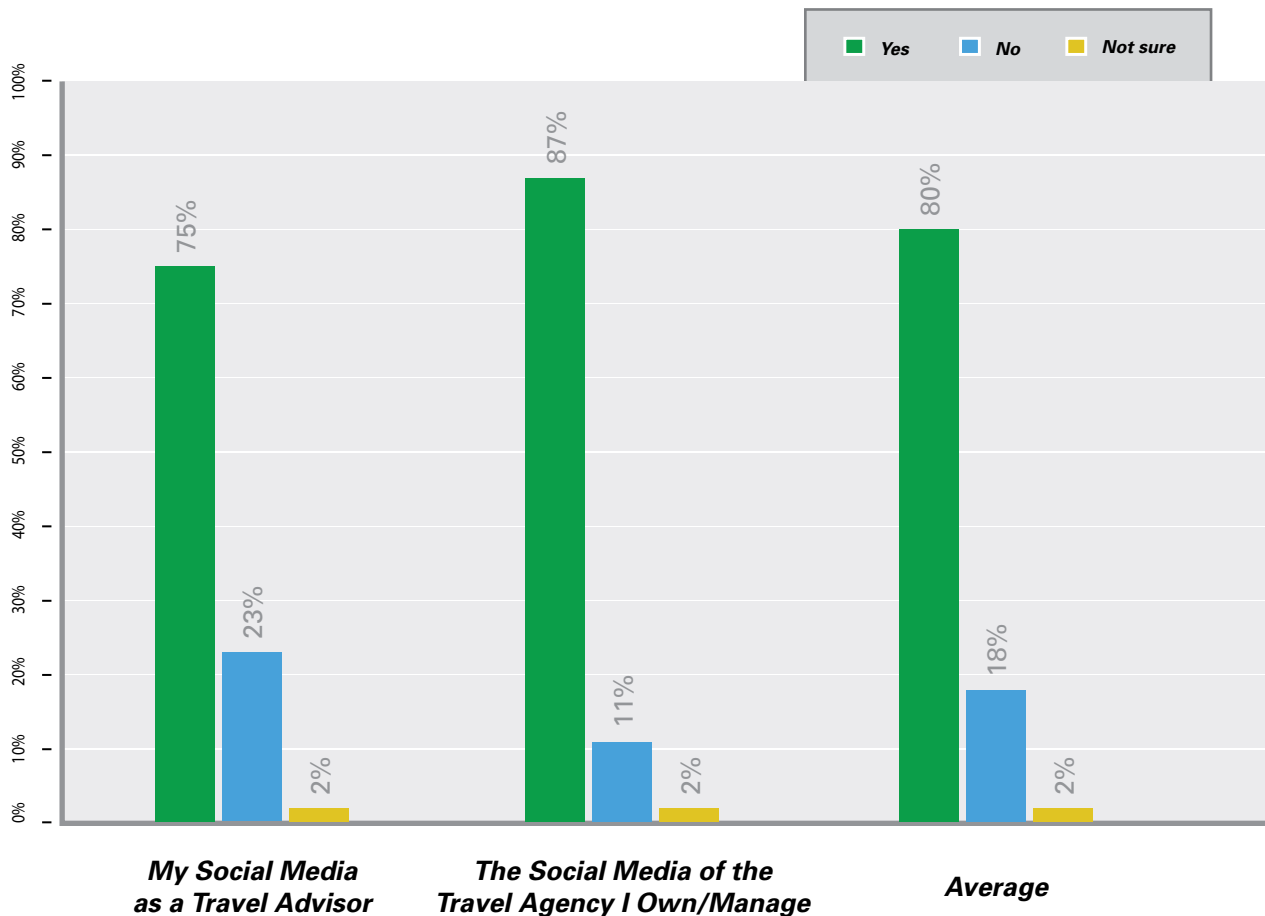
Compare Your Social Media Savvy



Agents were twice as likely (23% to 11%) not to have a business profile on Facebook as agencies, while overall 80% of respondents said they had Facebook business profiles.

“Having a Facebook page for your business can help you in your SEO efforts as well. All the links and posts on the page are indexed by search engines. So having a page flowing with continuous relevant content will definitely give you a jump in search engine rankings.”
— iMarketing Factory

Do you have a business profile on Facebook?



Results may not add up to 100% due to roundup.



Compare Your Social Media Savvy

While slightly over half (51%) of agencies use the analytics provided by social media to gather information about their target audience, only 37% of advisors use analytics for their own social media efforts.

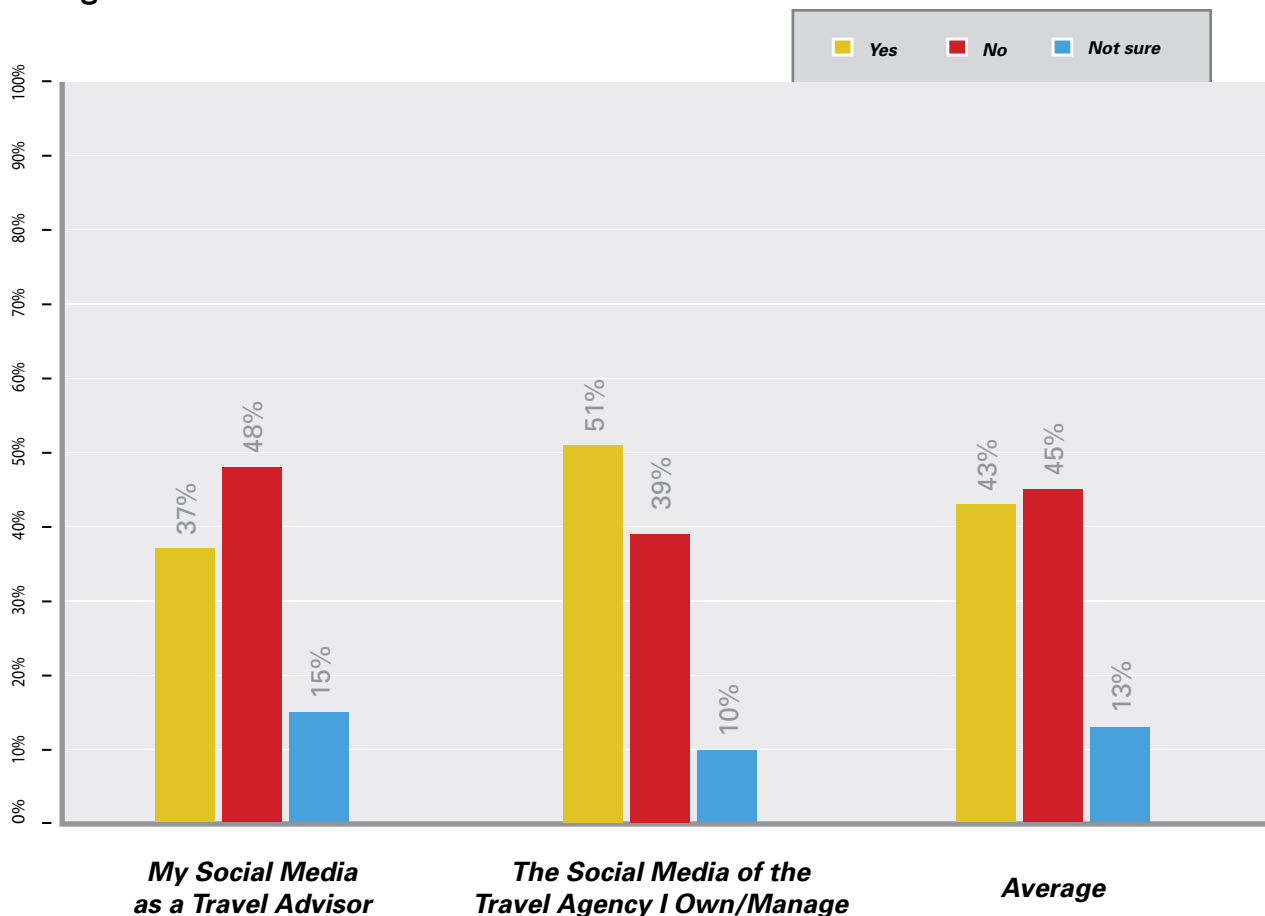
“Social media is crowded. It’s competitive. And it’s essential to test and track your results so that you can identify the most effective strategies – which is why social media analytics are so important.” — Sysomos



TIP

Be sure to track your social media ROI so you know what works and what doesn't. Tracking any marketing, including social media, is critical to the success of sales.

Do you use the analytics provided by social media to gather information about your target audience?



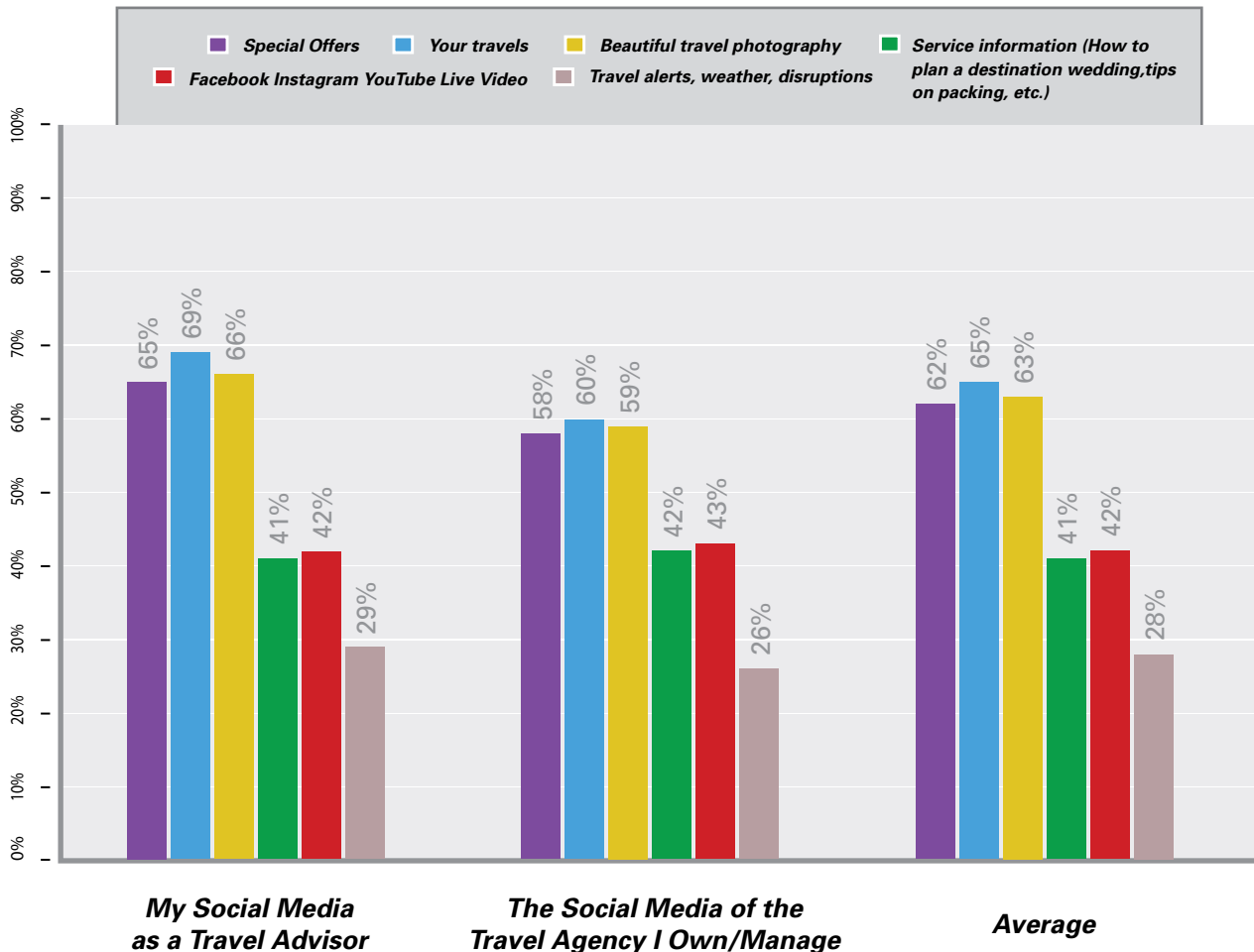


Social Media Posts

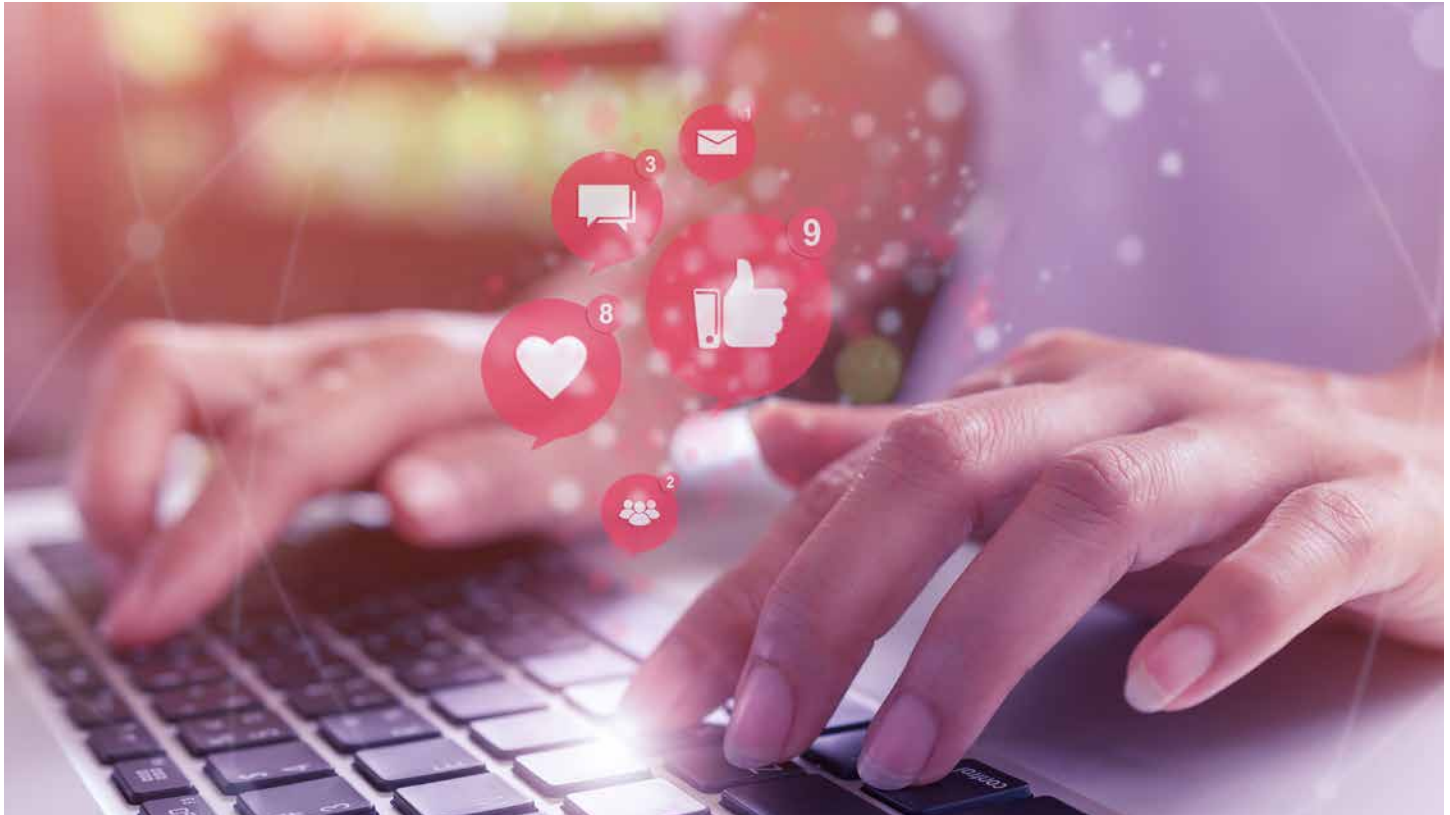
Photography from the travel of agents themselves (65%), beautiful travel photography (63%) and special offers (62%) are the most effective content, according to agents in our survey, while slightly over 40% said service information, such as how to plan a destination wedding or tips on packing, as well as live videos posted on their social media work best. Only about a quarter (28%) of agents found it effective to post travel alerts about weather or other disruptions.

Agents also told us that they received positive responses from sharing pictures from the trips of clients, running contests, and offering up mini-quizzes and fun travel related memes. Several agents said they like to use their social media to promote industry news, such as new ships or newly opened hotels as well as provide destination updates and share relevant articles to inspire travel. One agency created a polar bear spokesman named Bernie to help grab the attention of viewers.

In thinking about the social media strategy of your agency, what type of social media posts do you find most effective? (Check all that apply)



Results may not add up to 100% due to roundup.



How to Protect YOUR AGENCY FROM SOCIAL MEDIA LAWSUITS

Why it's important to know FTC rules before you post. by Doug Gollan

A stunningly large swath of the travel industry may be legally on thin ice, putting themselves and their companies at risk because of postings by influencers on social media, websites, and blogs, according to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

There could be ramifications for travel agents who use post-trip reviews on their website or social media, as well.

The issue was highlighted in April 2017, when the FTC announced it had sent 90 letters to high-profile influencers that they “should clearly and conspicuously disclose their relationships to brands when promoting or endorsing products through social media.” It followed up in September with 21 more letters, so the topic has been getting a good deal of attention in the advertising and marketing trades. Travel is thought to be the third largest industry where influencers play a major role, behind only health/beauty and fashion. It’s also an industry where the stakes are high, with consumers paying thousands of dollars and spending something they

can’t get back – their vacation time.

Travel Market Report spoke with a variety of marketing specialists, lawyers, suppliers, agents, and the FTC about what this means for agents. The good news is that protecting yourself and your company is easy, costs nothing, won’t impact the effectiveness of your blog or social media, and some believe will actually enhance it.

DO YOU HAVE A MATERIAL RELATIONSHIP?

If you say, I’m a travel agent, not an influencer, let me stop you. The FTC and others we talked to see you as the ultimate influencer since you are a

professional expert. When you look to the FTC, one of the two important tests in deciding whether or not social media posts or blogs require disclosure is if there is a “material” connection between you and the supplier, which by the way, is not limited to payments nor free product, including stays, as is common with professional influencers.

When it relates to you, the travel agent, it could be because you stay in an \$800 room for \$100, or when you visit and pay \$800, you are upgraded to the Presidential Suite. It could also be that you are invited to an advisory board meeting where your stay is covered by the host hotel or cruise line. You may



believe because you are providing your professional advice to that hotel, hotel group, cruise line or destination, you are exempt. But, if you are posting and blogging from the cruise or resort with images or articles about the great pool, fantastic kid's club or whatever, you should disclose you stayed for free or that suite came via an upgrade.

BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE.

Maybe you paid for the hotel, but they gifted you a dinner at their 5-star restaurant or a spa treatment. If you post about how great the spa is without disclosing your mud bath was free, that very well could be a violation when it comes to the FTC.

You may say, "I am a travel agent. Virtually anyone who sees my posts or reads my blog knows I get free stays, deeply discounted trips and upgrades to the best suites." This leads us to the second, and equally important, point to consider.

According to the FTC, "The issue is – and always has been – whether the audience understands the reviewer's relationship to the company whose products are being recommended. If the audience understands the relationship, a disclosure isn't needed."

Michael Ostheimer, a senior FTC attorney, notes somebody who is not your client could see your post or read your blog, and based on your positive review, book directly with the supplier. If the person had a problem they couldn't resolve with the supplier, they might then file a lawsuit alleging that they did not know or understand you had a material relationship, citing your musings or snapshots as one of the reasons they were induced to purchase. If the FTC or a court decides, by knowing you got a discount, upgrade or freebie, it would have given different weight to your review, you will have a problem.

If you post about how great the spa is without disclosing your mud bath was free, that very well could be a violation when it comes to the FTC.

As you think about what you need to disclose, if you are paying a rate that is available to all or most agents, and you didn't receive any additional perks, you may be OK, but it's a gray area. Because you are an agent with a specific company, consortia or supplier preferred program, if you are receiving extra consideration during your stay, because of those relationships, you should disclose.

PUT THINGS IN WRITING

There are ways to make it clear to readers there is a material relationship. Ostheimer says, whatever you do, make sure it's not ambiguous. For example, "Thank you, Hotel X, for inviting me to preview this fantastic resort" is probably not enough. The FTC says you also need to take reasonable steps to instruct both employees and any influencers you might hire.

Mathew Evins, chairman and co-founder of Evins Communications, which contracts influencers on behalf of its clients, says providing FTC guidelines should be a basic step. In working with

influencers, the agency requires the ability to review and approve any posts and also monitors influencers after the fact. The FTC attorney says, in terms of your employees, reasonable efforts most likely suffice. Providing them with the guidelines and having a written acknowledgement that they read and understand would be a natural place to start.

DO YOU NEED TO HIRE AN ATTORNEY TO COMPLY?

The FTC says no, if you are going to be clear about disclosing and take the view that there could be a sufficient number of readers or viewers who may not know you only paid \$500 for that \$5,000 suite, stayed gratis or received the mud bath at the spa for free. "What matters is effective communication," say the bureau's guidelines, continuing, "A disclosure like 'Company X gave me [name of product], and I think it's great' gives your readers the information they need. Or, at the start of a short video, you might say, 'The products I'm going to use in this video were given to me by their manufacturers.' That gives the necessary heads-up to your viewers." Also make sure it appears when scrolling on mobile devices where you sometimes only see a few words of a post.

YOU'RE NOT ALONE

A watch retailer, who is hosted on a trip to visit the manufacturer's workshop in Switzerland to get trained about new product and see how it's being made, would have to disclose that they got a free trip (even if they didn't get a free watch), if they decided to share on social media or blog about it. A camera store owner or employee who receives free lenses to test again would have to disclose that fact, if they chose to publicize it on social media or through articles on their website.

When it comes to whether your audience understands that you have material relationships with entities you are posting about, it would be safer to err on the side of caution. For more information about this important topic, read the FTC's guidance here.



Who do you follow on social media?

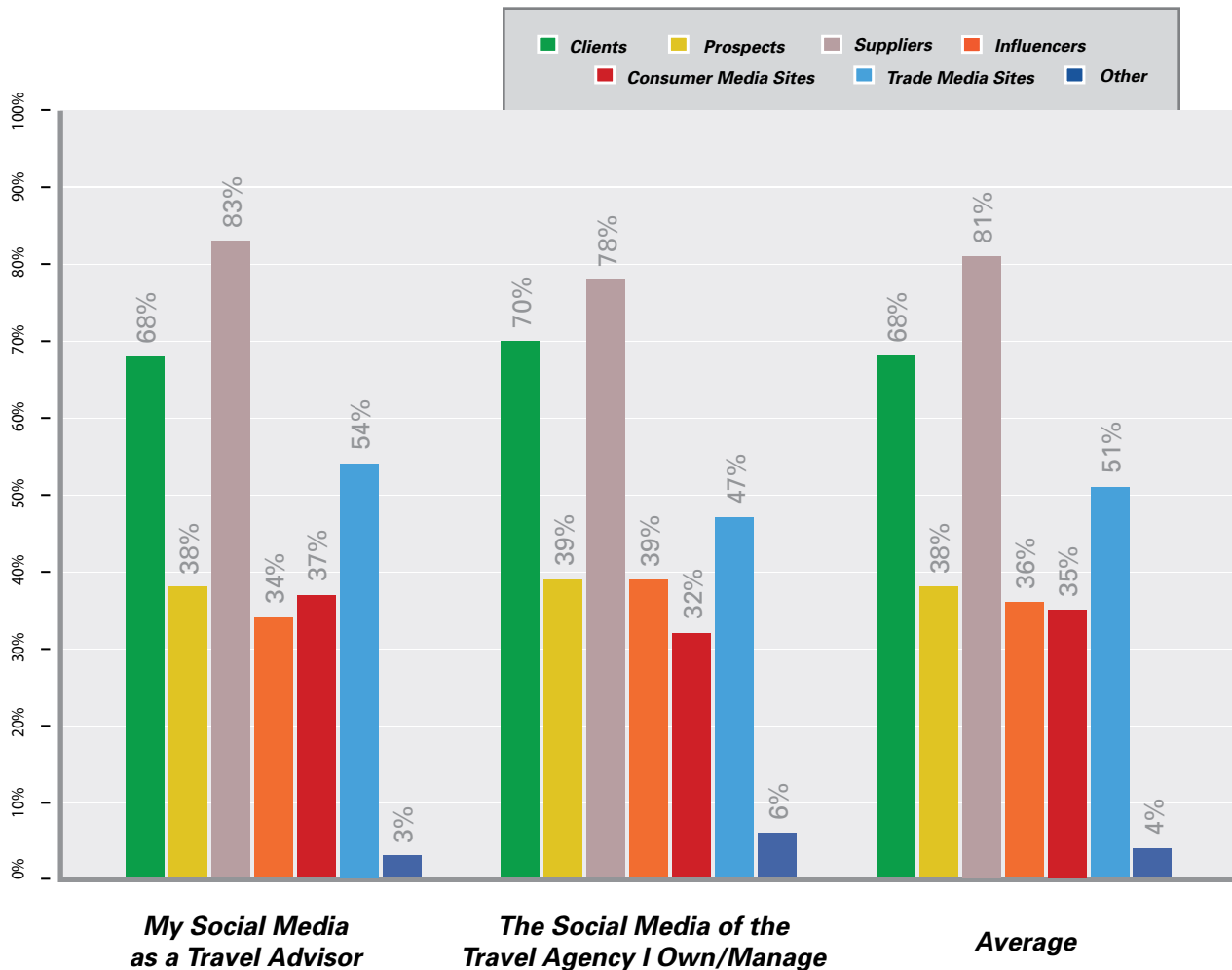
Both agency sites (78%) and individual advisors (83%) are most likely to follow suppliers via social media followed by clients (68%). After that, trade media sites (51%) were in a strong third place slot, followed by following prospects (38%), influencers (36%) and consumer media sites (35%).

One agent said, "By following suppliers we can see if they are offering something better to 'our/my' clients directly" while another discussed the etiquette of following, saying, "I never request to be friends with clients; I let them request me, and I always accept." A number of respondents said they don't follow anyone, while one agent said they use social media to follow the competition and others said they follow government pages like TSA, the State Department as well as weather.



Respondents who said they had sold at least \$25,000 via social media in the past year were more likely to follow their clients (78%) and trade media (62%).

Who do you follow on social media? (check all that apply)





PERFECT DAY AT COCO CAY

DEBUTING MAY 2019

This isn't vacation days spent. This is bragging rights earned. Tell your clients to get their bucket lists ready, because Perfect Day at CocoCay is packed with first of their kind thrills and one of a kind ways to chill — only on Royal Caribbean®.

THRILL WATERPARK	The biggest wave pool in the Caribbean and the tallest waterslide in North America — the 135-foot Daredevil's Peak — are just two of the thrills your clients can conquer.
COCO BEACH CLUB	The exclusive Coco Beach Club elevates the perfect beach day with an oceanfront infinity pool, upgraded cuisine and the only overwater cabanas in the Bahamas.
UP, UP AND AWAY	This tethered helium balloon takes adventure to new heights, offering Caribbean views from up to 400 feet above the island.
OASIS LAGOON	This is no mirage — it's the largest freshwater pool in the Caribbean, with a family friendly sloping entry, a swim-up bar, and various coves and islands for lounging.
CAPTAIN JACK'S	Your clients can jam out to live music, chow down on chicken wings and crispy steak fries, and settle into a rope swing seat with a drink from the rowboat bar.
SPLASHAWAY BAY	Our largest Splashaway Bay yet has more fun by the gallon than ever before including five waterslides and two massive drench buckets, all complimentary.

Visit LoyalToYouAlways.com/PerfectDay



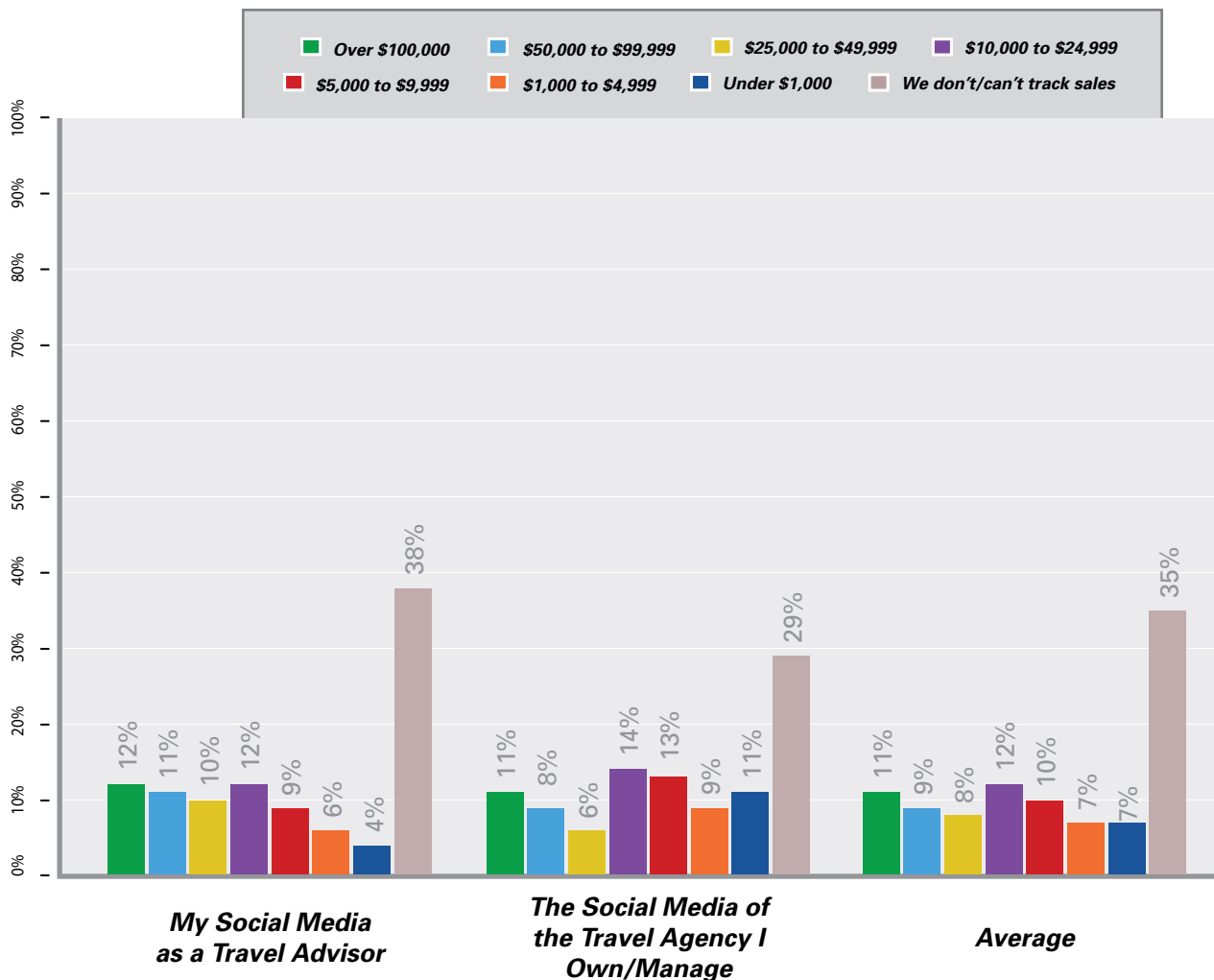


Social Media Leads

Social media is ringing the cash register, according to respondents with over at least 11% of advisors and agencies saying they have been able to generate at least \$100,000 in sales via their social media efforts. For advisors, 33% said social media had resulted in at least \$25,000 in sales over the past 12 months. Interestingly, only 25% of agency websites achieved similar results. Tracking sales wasn't universal with 38% of advisors

and 29% of agencies saying they "don't or can't track sales." Some of the respondents who aren't tracking conversions said they are "currently creating a plan to track better" or are "just developing" tracking methods. One agent said, "It is difficult to draw straight lines from client interaction and a sale. Social media is part of an overall strategy of engagement."

In the last 12 months, how much sales volume have you or your agency generated from social media leads?



Results may not add up to 100% due to roundup.



Planning your time at the new CocoCay? Here are three options.

We all know there's no such thing as a 'one-size-fits-all' vacation. For some, it's all about discovering and doing new things. For others, it's about disconnecting from reality and finding the perfect chill spot. Still others like a balance of full-throttle activity and relaxation. Check out three easy plans for spending your time on Perfect Day at CocoCay.

PLAN 1: AN EPIC FAMILY ADVENTURE

9 A.M. Your family adventure begins at Thrill Waterpark. A half-day pass gives you four hours of access to 13 waterslides — including the tallest waterslide in North America — the largest wave pool in the Caribbean, the Adventure Pool and its many obstacles, and complimentary beach chairs and towels.

11:30 A.M. Perfect Day at CocoCay has the only zip line with a water landing in the Bahamas, and it's fast. Zip Line admission can be purchased separately or bundled with your admission to Thrill Waterpark.

12:30 P.M. Enjoy lunch with a side of harbor views at the nearby Skipper's Grill, serving up complimentary salads, sandwiches, tacos, burgers and other grilled favorites.

2 P.M. Wrap up your day at South Beach, where you'll find plenty of beachside activities and water sports.

4 P.M. It's time to head back to the ship, where more adventure awaits! To get back, just take the tram to the pier.

PLAN 2: RELAX AND RECHARGE Overwater Cabanas — Debuting December 2019

8:30 A.M. Head to Chill Island on the east side of CocoCay, where you'll find crystal clear tropical waters and plenty of ways to relax and recharge. Access to Chill Island is complimentary, but for an additional cost you can up your relaxation game by reserving your own private cabana!

Post up at Coco Beach Club. Admission includes access to an exclusive beach, a beachfront infinity edge pool and complimentary dining at The Grille. You'll also find the first overwater cabanas in The Bahamas.

12 P.M. At lunchtime, tuck into some beachside BBQ at Chill Grill, offering complimentary grab and go options

plus a self-serve beer station at an additional cost.

1 P.M. It's five o'clock somewhere, so grab a Coco Loco — CocoCay's signature drink — at the swim-up bar before lounging on one of the three swim-up islands in Oasis Lagoon, the Caribbean's largest freshwater pool.

4 P.M. You've now achieved your perfect ten zen — it's time to head back to the ship. The tram runs every 15 minutes and will drop you off at the pier.

PLAN 3: A PERFECT BLEND OF THRILLS AND CHILL

Up, up and Away

9 A.M. Begin your day at the Thrill Waterpark. Purchase a half-day pass—you'll enjoy four hours of access to all of the water slides and attractions while still having time to relax and check out the private island's other offerings later in the day.

12 P.M. Enjoy lunch at Skipper's Grill, which offers complimentary salads, sandwiches, tacos, burgers and a self-serve beer station at an additional cost. Then get ready to take to the skies in Up, Up and Away, a 10-minute helium balloon ride that soars up to 450 feet above the island.

2 P.M. Head to Chill Island — the ultimate beach escape with clear tropical waters, white sand beaches and plenty of shade. Or head to Oasis Lagoon and hit the swim-up bar for a Coco Loco in the Caribbean's largest freshwater pool.

4 P.M. Now that you're fully refreshed and recovered from the morning's adventures, take the tram to the pier and head back to the ship.

CALL TO ACTION

Experience all this and more only with Royal Caribbean. For more information, visit Loyaltoyoualways.com/PerfectDay

*Disclaimer: *We based our schedules on an 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. call at CocoCay. The exact time spent in port may vary depending on when you visit. Coco Beach Club and overwater cabanas are scheduled to open December 2019. All destination features and experiences, and related delivery timing for these features, are currently in development and are subject to change without notice. Images and messaging for Perfect Day at CocoCay reflect current design concepts and may include artistic renderings. All destination features and experiences, and related delivery timing for these features, are currently in development and are subject to change without notice. ©2018 Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. Ships' registry: The Bahamas.*



BEHIND THE CELEBRITY REVOLUTION: A \$500-Million Modernization Transforming an Entire Fleet

The Celebrity RevolutionSM started with the introduction of the cruise line's newest ship, *Celebrity Edge*[®]. Launched in November, its innovative design made it one of the most eagerly anticipated new vessels of 2018.

The innovation continued with the announcement of *Celebrity Flora*SM, the first ship designed specifically for traveling to the Galapagos Islands. Now, Celebrity Cruises is bringing together more than 500 leading architects, designers, and engineers to revolutionize their entire fleet with new concepts inspired by the ship that started it all, *Celebrity Edge*. Its streamlined aesthetic, fashionable color palettes, and airy layouts are informing the design choices being made to bring the rest of Celebrity's fleet to the edge.

A FRESH START

For Edge, Celebrity Cruises selected a team of the world's best designers based on their portfolios and their inexperience with cruise ships — so the vessel would be a departure from traditional cruise ship design. The spaces onboard are unlike any found at sea. Edge quickly became the inspiration for the rest of the fleet. During the Celebrity Revolution, all staterooms fleetwide are being refreshed with new color palettes, plush upholstery with modern silhouettes, and luxurious finishes. Updated bars, restaurants, casinos, spas, and lounges will similarly echo the ship's breakthrough interiors.

ELEVATING THE SUITE LIFE

The number of suites more than doubled from previous builds, and all suites are being redesigned. Two new suite categories were also introduced: Iconic Suites and the Edge Villas. Positioned high above the bridge of the ship, Iconic Suites offer sweeping views and are the largest staterooms in the fleet, at 1,892 square feet. The Edge Villas are two-story luxury residences that offer 950 square feet of split-level splendor. All suites fleetwide will also come with an invitation to experience The Retreat.

THE RETREAT

First revealed on *Celebrity Edge*, The Retreat is an all-new luxury experience that includes private dining, an exclusive lounge, access to The Retreat Sundeck, and a personal butler. Now, every ship will offer The Retreat Sundeck and The Retreat Lounge, chic private sanctuaries where guests can unwind. All guests who book a suite will also have access to Luminae at The Retreat, a private restaurant featuring unique menus crafted by a Michelin-starred chef. Celebrity is the only premium cruise line to offer every suite guest this level of luxury and exclusivity.

A NEW STATUS QUO

It's not just the suites that are getting a design overhaul. From inside staterooms to AquaClass[®], all accommodations will feature refreshed bathrooms with new finishes and fixtures, and Celebrity's eXhale[™]

bedding featuring luxurious cashmere mattresses. Your clients may never want to leave the room, but there's much more to explore on board.

ONBOARD EXPERIENCES EVOLVED

New culinary experiences and unique shops are being rolled out fleetwide. Oceanview Café, a guest favorite, is being redesigned with an open, airy, marketplace-inspired layout offering dishes from around the world. Le Petit Chef[™], the first augmented reality dining experience, will now entertain guests at all Qsine[®] restaurants across the fleet. Day or night, Rendezvous Bar will offer an enlarged bar and quieter, cozier nooks.

New high-end boutiques are also being introduced, from some of the world's hottest luxury brands, including

Celebrity Cruises is bringing together more than 500 leading architects, designers, and engineers to revolutionize their entire fleet.

Shinola, John Hardy, and Hublot. Finally, state-of-the-art digital photo galleries will be unveiled, allowing your clients to browse and savor their vacation memories in a snap.

The Celebrity Revolution is as ambitious as it is unique. But the payoff will be worth it. No matter which Celebrity ship your client is sailing on, they'll be guaranteed to enjoy a cruise that's on the leading edge.



NO FILTER ON DISCOVERY

Silversea's Voyages Deliver Post-Worthy Moments

Nothing compares to experiencing the true essence of the world's best destinations. Immersing in extraordinary history, culture, landscapes and cuisine beyond the coast, away from the crowds — this is the ultimate reward for the discerning traveler. For tech-savvy adventurers, sharing these unforgettable moments on social media delivers its own distinct thrill. In the same spirit, Silversea's luxury cruises are designed to let curious travelers plug into the world around them, on uncommon journeys that unlock deeper discoveries and pack in post-worthy encounters that are sure to impress any social media savant.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Silversea continues to set the standard and surpass all expectations of ultra-luxury cruising — but the journey of a lifetime begins even before booking. That's why Silversea's dedicated sales team provides travel partners with indispensable support resources to make selling a breeze. Silversea's Discover travel blog features real stories from Expedition Team leaders, vivid photography showcasing remarkable scenery from worldwide cruise itineraries, as well as behind-the-scenes videos from

iconic photographer Steve McCurry's recent travels with the cruise line. All blog posts are original and present an experiential glimpse into what it's truly like to sail with Silversea. The depictive content can be easily shared across social media platforms to promote Silversea's global destinations and detail the luxury cruising experience.

Silversea's online Travel Professional Center features the latest voyage brochures and customizable marketing materials, while the Selling Silversea Guide contains an easy-to-follow booking management timeline. Travel advisors who register for MySilversea.com will also enjoy full access to manage bookings, download collateral from Marketing Central, and earn rewards at Travel Agent University. Silversea remains steadfast in delivering once-in-a-lifetime experiences, by keeping true to a legacy of uncompromising luxury and the experimental spirit of Silversea Expeditions.

INSPIRED ITINERARIES

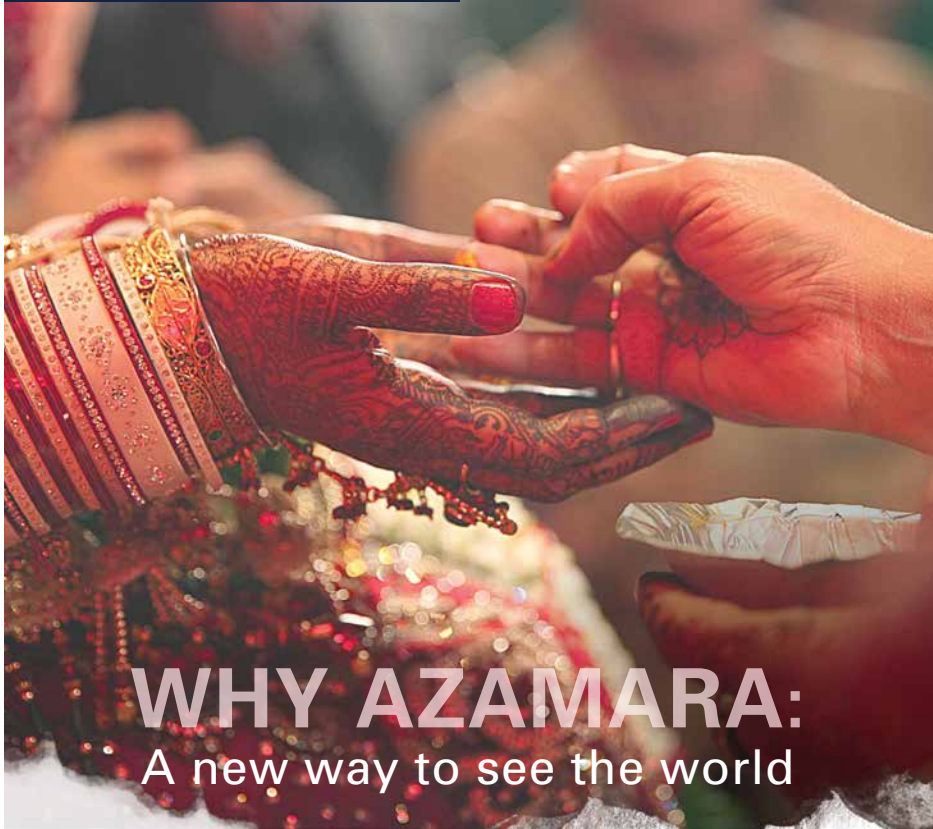
When it comes to off-the-path experiences that reveal the world's hot spots and hidden gems, Silversea's itineraries are second-to-none. Late departures and overnight stays inspire exploration on the deepest level, while brand-new routes are added every year

to highlight unfamiliar destinations rarely reached by everyday travelers. Guests can now unravel Cuba's many secrets while cruising through the Caribbean or discover Easter Island, one of the most isolated places on the face of the Earth, on a voyage off the coast of South America. Spanning virtually every corner of the globe, Silversea's itineraries touch on the least-explored regions, including the volcanic landscapes of the Russian Far East and even the Great White Continent of Antarctica.

THE ART OF AUTHENTICITY

Silversea's voyages are far more than a cruise vacation. They come closer than ever before to the authentic, unfiltered beauty of the world. It's trekking off the beaten tundra trail, identifying a rare species of seabird, and savoring the last bite of unfamiliar flavors. It's the type of trip travelers have only read about in books, directly out of wild imaginations, that few believe could be possible. But they do exist — only with Silversea.

More than just snapping Instagram photos and tweeting epic travel tales, this is about straying away from the Facebook timeline to see the world in real time — and then taking home memories to share throughout a lifetime. *#ThisIsSilversea*



WHY AZAMARA: A new way to see the world

We believe in connecting people to people, people with cultures and people with themselves, by bringing you closer to new experiences that help form who you are and give you a fresh perspective of life.

We do this through our **Destination Immersion®** experiences, the philosophy behind every Azamara voyage. We have carefully curated immersive itineraries, featuring longer stays (later than 8:00 p.m.), more overnights and unique night touring, allowing you to travel deeper and absorb more of the history, arts, cuisine and local customs that make each place unique. Join us and discover the night and day difference of how destinations rise when the sun sets.

Find your inspiration and embark on the insatiable search of new cultures and unknown experiences. Inspiration that is ever-present in the ancient stories of South Africa's Zulu locals. Lit in the hazy wisps of a shamanic ceremony in the heart of the Amazon. Overheard in the cheerful banter of

a Dublin pub. Felt in the timeworn hands of a fisherman who's mastered a millenary craft on the Sri Lankan shore.

Sometimes visiting a few ports within a country is not enough. That's why we have pioneered the concept of Country-IntensiveSM Voyages — itineraries that include most iconic destinations as well as hidden gems, all within a single country. Ultimately, allowing you to unpack just once and dive into your country of choice without worrying about transportation or hotel transfers.

Our Country-Intensive destinations now include Ireland, Scotland, Denmark, and South Africa — as well as past favorites like Greece, Croatia, Cuba, Spain, Italy, Iceland, Norway, New Zealand, and Australia.

CONTINUING TO EXPAND OUR Destination Immersion® experiences by land, we have created unique pre- and post- voyage options. Through partnerships with some of the most renowned land tour operators, the Land & Sea Packages take you behind

the scenes of local life with one inclusive price, from lodging, meals, transportation and more. It's land travel, by ship.

To further immerse you in local experiences, we offer everyone a complimentary AzAmazing EveningsSM. Our exclusive, bespoke events that are designed to give you a unique look into the culture and heritage of the destination; often hosted in beautiful historic venues.

While our global guests come to us for the destinations and the way we make them come to life, they return to Azamara for the inclusive, intimate club-like environment onboard. From the international crew members — with over 55 nationalities — who are both genuinely friendly and happy to make them feel welcome, to the host of inclusive amenities such as beverages that include select standard spirits, international beers and wines, bottled water, soft drinks, specialty coffees, and teas. To concierge services, self-service laundry, gratuities and more.

Enjoy unexpectedly authentic service.

Enjoy unexpectedly authentic service. Visit a bartender who knows your favorite drink. Return to your stateroom with your sheets turned down just the way you like them. Our team strives to anticipate your needs and meet them swiftly — surprising you with even the smallest attention to detail.

Our three sister ships — *Azamara Journey®*, *Azamara Quest®*, and *Azamara PursuitSM* — are boutique hotels at sea that can accommodate approximately 700 guests and are perfectly sized to cross oceans, sail into intimate rivers and along scenic waterways, while enjoying prime docking locations.

Azamara Club Cruises® welcomes you to uncover all seven continents and discover a world within the world.

EXPLORE FURTHERSM

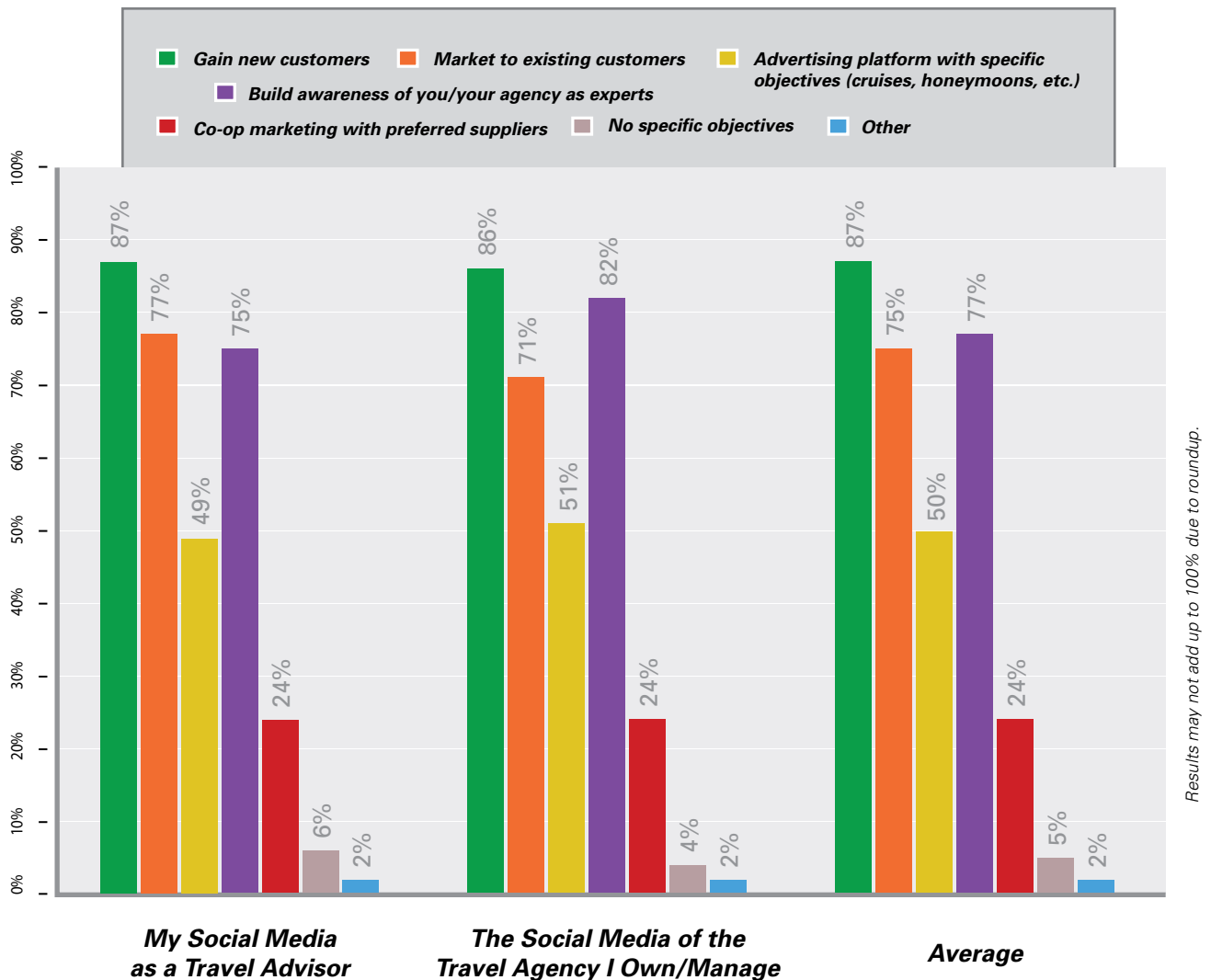


What are your social media objectives?

Gaining new customers was the top reason both advisors (87%) and agencies (86%) use social media, however, building awareness and positioning expertise was the second most important objective for agencies (82%). Marketing to existing customers (77%) took the second spot for advisors. Half of respondents (50%) said they used social media as an advertising platform with specific

objectives while 24% said they used social media for co-op marketing with preferred suppliers. Agents said using social media helps “build trust” and keeps them “top of mind” while positioning themselves as “experts” and reminding clients they are “available.” One agent said, “Social Media is one pillar of our marketing strategy, which is as important as other platforms.”

What are your social media objectives? (Check all that apply)





Social Media Platforms

Facebook is by far the dominant social media platform when it comes to the travel agency community with 97% of respondents saying they use it for their business with Instagram (60%) and LinkedIn (59%) in a distant near tie for the second and third spots. Twitter was used by 38% of respondents followed by YouTube at 28% and Pinterest at 26%.

Agencies were more likely to use LinkedIn than advisors (63%-56%). Agencies (44%) were significantly more

likely to Tweet than advisors (35%). Other platforms mentioned included WhatsApp, Blogspot, Snapchat, and Yelp.



Agents that said they had sold at least \$25,000 via social media in the past year were statistically more likely to use Instagram (72%) than the overall population.

Which social media platforms do you or your agency use for business?

Facebook	USE	DON'T USE	NOT SURE
<i>My Social Media as a Travel Advisor</i>	97%	2%	1%
<i>The Social Media of the Travel Agency I Own/Manage</i>	98%	2%	1%
<i>Total Average</i>	97%	2%	1%
Instagram	USE	DON'T USE	NOT SURE
<i>My Social Media as a Travel Advisor</i>	59%	34%	7%
<i>The Social Media of the Travel Agency I Own/Manage</i>	61%	34%	5%
<i>Total Average</i>	60%	34%	6%
LinkedIn	USE	DON'T USE	NOT SURE
<i>My Social Media as a Travel Advisor</i>	56%	36%	8%
<i>The Social Media of the Travel Agency I Own/Manage</i>	63%	33%	4%
<i>Total Average</i>	59%	35%	6%
Pinterest	USE	DON'T USE	NOT SURE
<i>My Social Media as a Travel Advisor</i>	24%	64%	12%
<i>The Social Media of the Travel Agency I Own/Manage</i>	30%	65%	6%
<i>Total Average</i>	26%	64%	9%

Results may not add up to 100% due to roundup.



Social Media Platforms

Chart 9 continued



Twitter	USE	DON'T USE	NOT SURE
<i>My Social Media as a Travel Advisor</i>	35%	52%	13%
<i>The Social Media of the Travel Agency I Own/Manage</i>	44%	50%	6%
Total Average	38%	51%	10%
Tumblr	USE	DON'T USE	NOT SURE
<i>My Social Media as a Travel Advisor</i>	3%	81%	15%
<i>The Social Media of the Travel Agency I Own/Manage</i>	4%	91%	5%
Total Average	3%	85%	12%
WeChat	USE	DON'T USE	NOT SURE
<i>My Social Media as a Travel Advisor</i>	3%	82%	15%
<i>The Social Media of the Travel Agency I Own/Manage</i>	5%	89%	6%
Total Average	4%	85%	11%
Youtube	USE	DON'T USE	NOT SURE
<i>My Social Media as a Travel Advisor</i>	29%	60%	11%
<i>The Social Media of the Travel Agency I Own/Manage</i>	27%	68%	5%
Total Average	28%	63%	9%

Results may not add up to 100% due to rounding.





Which social media platforms are most important to your business selling travel?

Facebook for both owners/managers and advisors is not only the most dominant platform in terms of use, but is by far the one both groups say is “most important” to their business of selling travel. Over 70% placed Facebook a 4 or 5 in terms of importance, compared to 39% for Instagram, 27% for LinkedIn, 20% for Twitter, and 18% for YouTube. For Facebook, 74% of advisors rated it a 4 or 5 in terms of importance compared to 69% for owner/managers. Conversely, 18% of owners/managers find Pinterest important compared to 11% of advisors, the only two platforms where the two groups were out of sync.



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TMR OUTLOOK ON SOCIAL MEDIA

On a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being the most important/1 being the least important, which social media platforms are most important to your business selling travel?

* Excludes respondents who “Do not use.”

	1	2	3	4	5
Facebook	16%	4%	6%	12%	60%
Instagram	10%	7%	14%	14%	25%
LinkedIn	11%	12%	19%	14%	13%
Pinterest	13%	7%	11%	6%	7%
Snapchat	12%	4%	7%	4%	4%
Twitter	10%	9%	12%	11%	9%
Tumblr	11%	3%	3%	1%	3%
WeChat	11%	2%	4%	1%	3%
YouTube	10%	6%	10%	8%	10%

Results may not add up to 100% due to roundup.



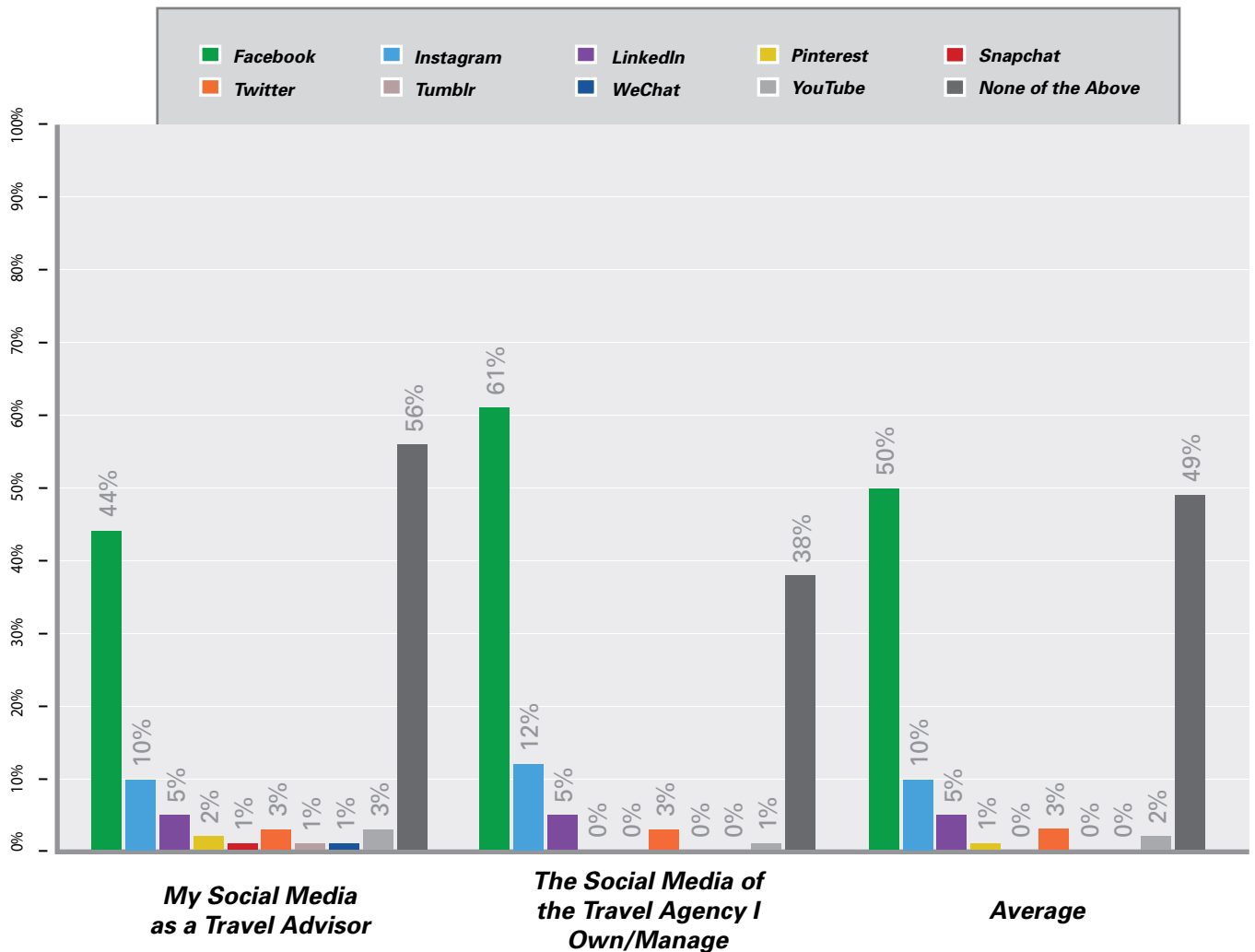
Which, if any social media, do you use to run paid advertising or posts?

Advisors are less likely to engage in paid advertising on social media than agencies by a 56% to 38% margin, however, for those that do, Facebook dominates with 61% of agencies telling us they use paid advertising on the platform and 44% of advisors doing the same. Instagram was used on a paid basis by 10% of both advisors and agencies while 5% of both groups said they used LinkedIn. While only 3% of advisors used paid advertising on YouTube, that was still higher than the 1% of agencies which did.

“We have had no success with Facebook ads, but that hasn’t kept us from trying every so often to see if we can hit a successful ad combination, set for local advertising only,” said one respondent.

Overall, the responses underscore how social networks have become a game changer for agencies and advisors who can use it to either supplement or replace more expensive traditional marketing activities, with many choosing to simply take advantage of social media’s free access.

Which, if any social media, do you use to run paid advertising or posts? (Check all that apply)



Results may not add up to 100% due to roundup.

How to Make **BIG MONEY** USING SOCIAL MEDIA

by Sandra Cottam McLemore

Industry pundit offers ideas to help travel advisors win at the social media game by making connections with new customers around the globe.

Thousands of travel entrepreneurs (agents, cruise lines, tour operators and hoteliers) have embraced the opportunity that social media marketing has offered their businesses. Most of them, regardless of technical ability, have attempted to jump onto each new social media platform and trend, and they have given it their best shot, some with a plan, but many leaning on a combination of intuition and trial-and-error.

Certainly, they continue to face steep learning curves, as social media algorithms and best practices change faster than most of us can keep up with. But for those travel agents and travel trade marketers who have diligently soaked up every bit of training, advice, and experience available, there is big money to be made.

Social media is being leveraged to attract and maintain new clients, as well as to uncover growth opportunities and areas for improvement within the travel industry overall. With over 500 million active users on Instagram alone, it is no surprise that a vast majority of travelers are keen to consume travel-related content. What's more, the opportunities for the travel industry to engage and convert this audience are unprecedented.

While the big online booking engines, large cruise lines, and mega hotel chains are able to put millions of dollars into paid ad campaigns and outsource niche agencies to run their campaigns, they fall short in their ability to create and nurture personal relationships with their followers. Instead, lesser known brands

and solo travel entrepreneurs are able to take advantage of their smaller audiences by engaging in personal dialogue and seeking out ideal clients to connect with on social media.

For travel agents and smaller brands that want to win big at the social media game, there are three key strategies to use and perfect:

1. Conversion is key

Understand that collecting followers brings a certain social proof to potential clients, but there is nothing gained if there is no conversion. Simultaneously, building the number of followers a brand has is a second priority to engagement and conversion. Conversion goals may include clicks to a website; signing up for a mailing list; establishing contact through email or by phone; and, at the very least, becoming an actual follower on social media.

2. Have a formal plan

Travel marketers and agents must learn to strategize first and post second. This means taking the time to identify which destinations and experiences they want to sell and selecting preferred suppliers to work with. To control the sales, you must control the narrative of what is being posted. If an agent has a goal to sell cruises, be it river or ocean, they need to focus their posts on the destinations and experiences

to be had in those chosen ports of call and onboard. Stunning imagery, descriptive and informative captions, and intelligent hashtags are essential for strong travel-related posts. Curated content not only strengthens a visual brand, but it also attracts the right audience.

3. Follow up and stay on task

If content is king, consistency is queen. Travel marketers and agents must post daily; and engage with their audience within hours of receiving questions or genuine inquiries. Social media is meant, by its very name, to be social in nature. The post-and-forget strategy just won't cut it.

WHAT YOU CAN GAIN

A thoughtful, intentional and consistent social media strategy can reap multiple benefits. In order to effectively use social media to make big money in travel, agents must put in place a combination of strategy, content curation, and consistency.

As 2018 comes to an end, this is the perfect time to formulate a marketing plan for next year that includes social media as a high priority. It's also a prime time to take in some additional industry-specific training on the topic. Travel agent host agencies and consortia are a good place to start in learning about and developing a social media strategy that brings in new business.

Sandra Cottam McLemore is a travel industry expert and TV host based in Los Angeles. She can be seen on inflight TV, cruise line channels, Huffington Post; and is often profiled in airline inflight magazines, travel websites, and lifestyle magazines as a world travel expert. She has worked in the travel industry for over 19 years for airlines, cruise lines, TV networks and media agencies. She consults with travel brands all around the world to correct their marketing and improve their revenue strategies.

Sandra also runs Village Girl Marketing, a media & marketing agency for travel brands specializing in content creation and design. She speaks regularly at travel industry events worldwide. In addition, she has plans to launch a new travel magazine and travel accessories collection.





How many times a month do you post on each platform?

With Facebook being far and away the most popular platform, not surprisingly 96% of agents told us they post at least once per month on the social media behemoth with 58% posting six or more times per month. While 28% of all respondents said they post at least six times per month on Instagram, 31% of agencies post at least six times per month compared to 25% of advisors. While only 22% of respondents said they post at least once per month to YouTube, advisors were more likely to post a video by a 25% to 19% margin.



How many times a month do you post on each platform?

	0	1-2	3-5	6-10	10+
Facebook	4%	18%	20%	16%	42%
Instagram	42%	16%	14%	10%	18%
LinkedIn	57%	25%	10%	3%	6%
Pinterest	78%	10%	5%	3%	4%
Snapchat	90%	4%	2%	1%	3%
Twitter	65%	11%	9%	4%	10%
Tumblr	95%	2%	0%	0%	3%
WeChat	95%	2%	1%	0%	2%
YouTube	77%	14%	3%	2%	3%

Results may not add up to 100% due to roundup.





How many bookings per month do you or your agency generate from the following social media platforms?

Facebook dominates in terms of generating bookings. Eighty percent of respondents said they get at least one booking per month from Facebook compared to 33% for Instagram, 19% for LinkedIn and just 17% from Twitter, the only three to break into double digits. Further, Facebook was the only platform where at least 10% of agents said they can track six or more bookings per month. For advisors, 23% told us they get at least one booking per month via LinkedIn versus 15% for agencies, the only area the numbers had a statistical deviance.



How many bookings per month do you or your agency generate from the following social media platforms?

	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20+
Facebook	20%	61%	10%	3%	2%	5%
Instagram	67%	26%	3%	1%	0%	3%
LinkedIn	80%	16%	1%	0%	0%	2%
Pinterest	92%	6%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Snapchat	95%	3%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Twitter	84%	12%	2%	0%	1%	2%
Tumblr	97%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
WeChat	97%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%
YouTube	87%	10%	1%	1%	0%	2%

Results may not add up to 100% due to roundup.



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Santorini, Greece by Steve McCurry



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Q&A *with* RYAN MCELROY

q The majority of agents say social media is very important or important to their business. What steps should more agents be taking and how can they use this research to their advantage?

a Consistency and leverage. Fortunately our industry has so much great content that can be developed. We have so many resources from destination and supplier content to agent fan and personal travel content to UGC (User-Generated Content) from our clients. We need to use a myriad of all these resources, along with the leveraging of the fact we, as travel professionals, travel so often to our advantage.

q In your opinion, what is the most important finding in this research, and why?

a The fact only 4 in 10 respondents have a plan for social media marketing. In order to be really, really, successful in digital marketing, a plan is key along with desired outcomes. A plan will keep you, your team and the organization on point and moving in the right direction.

q Are you surprised at the results? Are they in line with what you see in the market?

a I was a bit surprised with the limited knowledge of hashtags. The hashtag is how social media content is discovered. It's vital that advisors know the major hashtags our industry uses and is tagging both destinations and suppliers if applicable.

q Is there a certain number of times a month or an average of posts per day travel advisors should have? Is there a formula/method that can help them get started?

a I don't think it's all about frequency of number. Set aside the time, one hour a day, 3 hours a week etc. Ask yourself who is going to benefit from what I'm posting? Are you trying to inspire someone, educate someone, make someone smile, reinforce a brand promised?

q Which platform do you think is rising in popularity?

a Attention has shifted to Instagram. Travel is visual and Instagram caters to that. I would have thought the number of agencies/advisors engaging [on Instagram] would have been higher.

LinkedIn is underutilized. It's where professionals congregate. If you're looking for new clients that are active in your business community and want to support local business go there. The market is wide open for advisors/agencies on LinkedIn.

q Why do you think two-thirds of travel advisors use video?

a Storytelling and authenticity. Video doesn't need to be a production. Let your personality shine. People buy from advisors and agencies whom they trust. Video is a perfect way to instill trust.

q Is paid advertising a worthwhile investment on social media?

a Facebook's revenue is almost all ad based. It did over 13 billion in

the third quarter. Paid advertising works. However, you have to get good at it and you can't be doing "one and done" campaigns. You must commit to a monthly budget and get great at placing the ads, adjusting and testing them on the fly.

q What are travel advisors missing in the social media picture? What advice can you offer?

a Leveraging clients. Ask your clients if you can post some of their pictures and tag them. Interview them and put that content on your website and place it on Facebook and LinkedIn. Travelers love to brag and boast about their travel resume. Provide the soup box. Trust me they will be some of the most popular posts you ever do.

q There are agents who responded to our survey that said they generated \$25,000 or more from their social media efforts. Is there even more they could be doing to increase that number?

a Reverse engineer why the sale was made. What was the demographic of the person who was influenced by your posts, etc. Birds of a certain feather fly together. Go find more of those types of people and post more of that content.

Ryan has 18 years of travel industry experience. He has worked in every facet of the travel industry from Sheraton Hotels to international tour companies, including Collette Vacations. Ryan's role at Travel Agency Tribes is to collaborate on the strategic direction of the company as well as lead the sales and marketing functions. Driving growth through innovative solutions that help travel advisors build their business is his forte. Ryan lives in London Ontario, with his wife, two daughters, and Bernese Mountain Dog Oates.



Can you give us an example of something you tried on social media which didn't work?



What worked for some agents who took our survey, didn't work for others. However, the one element that most agents told us was least effective was paid advertising, including boosted posts. While agents said paid promotions were often successful in generating likes or views, they didn't generate business. While many agents said special supplier offers and marketing groups worked, just as many told us their similar efforts didn't turn up any sales or qualified leads.

CONCLUSIONS

What's clear is agency owners, managers, and advisors, at least those who represent the leisure-focused, top-producers who read Travel Market Report, have strongly embraced social media and are ambitious to do more.

What's also clear is while many advisors and agencies are generating sales from their efforts, most are doing it via instinct and perhaps have the opportunity to bolster their results by honing their knowledge of social media skills. This is reinforced when we looked specifically at respondents who told us they had sold at least \$25,000 via social media in the past year. These top sellers were more likely to have a formal social media marketing plan, use SEO in their social media strategy, use tools such as hash tags, video and analytics. They are also more likely to follow clients, trade media and use Instagram

10 Steps to Social Media Success

The travel advisors we surveyed who generated more than \$25,000 from their social media efforts employ the following steps:

- 1** *Establish objectives*
- 2** *Develop a social media marketing plan*
- 3** *Make social media a priority*
- 4** *Incorporate search engine optimization*
- 5** *Use hashtags*
- 6** *Incorporate video*
- 7** *Track and analyze the results of social media*
- 8** *Follow clients, suppliers and trade media on platforms*
- 9** *Look beyond Facebook at mediums such as Instagram and LinkedIn*
- 10** *Be consistent with social media efforts*

than the general population.

The agents who participated in TMR's Outlook on Social Media also seemed nonplussed that not everything they did was a hit, and seemed motivated to continue the process of trying, learning, and trying again. Perhaps the most impactful takeaway was that it is possible to find new customers and generate sales without having to engage in paid advertising or expensive consultants.



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SOCIAL MEDIA GLOSSARY

At (@) – The “at” sign precedes most usernames across social media. It is the designation that lets the network know that you’re writing a message that includes another user. It’s also the sign that proceeds your username in some social networks, most notably Twitter. Using the “@” sign with a username will let another user know that he/she was mentioned in your message; and you will get a message if anyone uses your username after that sign in a message that they write.

Direct Messages (DMs) – If you ever wanted to contact a user, but don’t want it to appear on your feed, then you can send a direct message. Facebook allows you to send DMs using its message app on the website and on the messaging app on mobile devices.

Feed – Your feed, or “Newsfeed” on Facebook, is a list of posts made by the people you are friends with and the accounts you follow. It shows everything, mostly in chronological order, that’s been posted by the people or companies you chose to follow. It will also show some paid posts, always marked as “Ad,” made by companies or people trying to reach you with their messages.

Follower – Followers are other social media users who have chosen to receive your messages. They are the people who are going to hear and see what you’re saying in their feed, without having to search (using a hashtag, term, or username) for your message. To Follow someone, go to their profile and click the “Follow” button.

Geotagging – Geotagging, or geolocation, allows other users to see the location from which you sent your post or message. Most social sites, including Facebook and Twitter, let you edit settings to allow your location to be tagged to a post. Geotagging also allows other users to find your post if they search by location.

Hashtag (#) – The hashtag is a tool for users to tag a post with a specific term or topic that usually makes it easier for other users to search for it. The “#” symbol allows social networks to recognize the phrase following it as a tag; and clicking on the term will give users a list of posts with that same hashtag.

If you want to write a message about a travel agent related issue — but don’t use the word “travel agent” in the message — then adding a “#travelagent” will mark the message with that tag, and allow the other users to find it.

Twitter also allows for “Cashtags” using the “\$” symbol, which is always a company’s stock symbol.

Like – Twitter says that “Liking” a post, by clicking the heart symbol under a tweet, “indicates that you appreciate it.”

On Facebook, “Liking” a page means that you want that information in your newsfeed, and you’ll see messages from that page until you “Unlike” the page.

Some people use Likes as bookmarks for messages they don’t want to forget. For instance, on Twitter, you can click your profile page and click on the Like page to see a chronological list of tweets you’ve Liked on the platform. Recently, news broke that Twitter was considering getting rid of the Like button, but no decisions have yet been made.

SOCIAL MEDIA GLOSSARY *continued*

List – Lists are a good way of separating the accounts you follow from each in order to get the specific content you want. For instance, if you just want to see travel agent-related content in your Twitter feed, then you'd have to create a "List" with users who only Tweet about travel agent-related topics. Clicking on that list on the tab in your profile will show only tweets from those users.

Timeline – Timeline is the Facebook term for your profile feed. It is where other users see what you have posted.

Tweet – A "Tweet" is Twitter-talk for a post or message.

Five Most Popular Social Media Platforms for Travel Advisors

Facebook – Facebook is a free social media platform that was founded in 2004. Available for both desktop and mobile use, Facebook connects people with friends, family, and businesses. It allows users to post, share, and engage with a wide range of content, such as photos, videos, and status updates. More recently, Facebook has added a "Go Live" feature enabling users to stream live content directly from their devices to their profile or page, allowing their audience to tune in and watch in real time. The platform currently boasts about 1.5 billion active users worldwide.

Instagram – Instagram is a photo-sharing application, owned by Facebook. It lets users take photos or videos; edit and apply filters to their content; and share their content instantly to their followers and certain geotagged networks, depending on the user's privacy settings, as well as other social networks like Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, and Foursquare. The app is primarily designed for mobile social sharing, and has gained more than 300 million users around the globe.

LinkedIn – LinkedIn is primarily a business-oriented social networking site with over 380 million members worldwide. Since its launch in 2003, the interface has mainly been used for professional networking by individuals and companies. It also provides a feed of articles and other content that is relevant for and determined by its users.

Pinterest – Pinterest is a photo-sharing network that allows users to upload, save, and categorize different "Pins" through unique collections called "Boards." More often than not, users structure each of their boards by theme, such as Food & Drink, Men's Luxury Fashion, Fitness, etc. Pinterest users are free to "Pin" and "Re-Pin" any content that they like.

Twitter – Twitter is a social network that allows its users to "Tweet," or share updates (within a 280-character limit) with their followers. Users can "Favorite" and "Retweet" the posts of other users or pages. They can also engage in conversations with others using "Mentions," "Replies," and "Hashtags" to help categorize their content.

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